

CHATTERBOX.



1916.

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TOO OLD FOR A STOCKING

Chatterbox

For 1916

FOUNDED BY J. L. CLARKE, M.A.



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1916.

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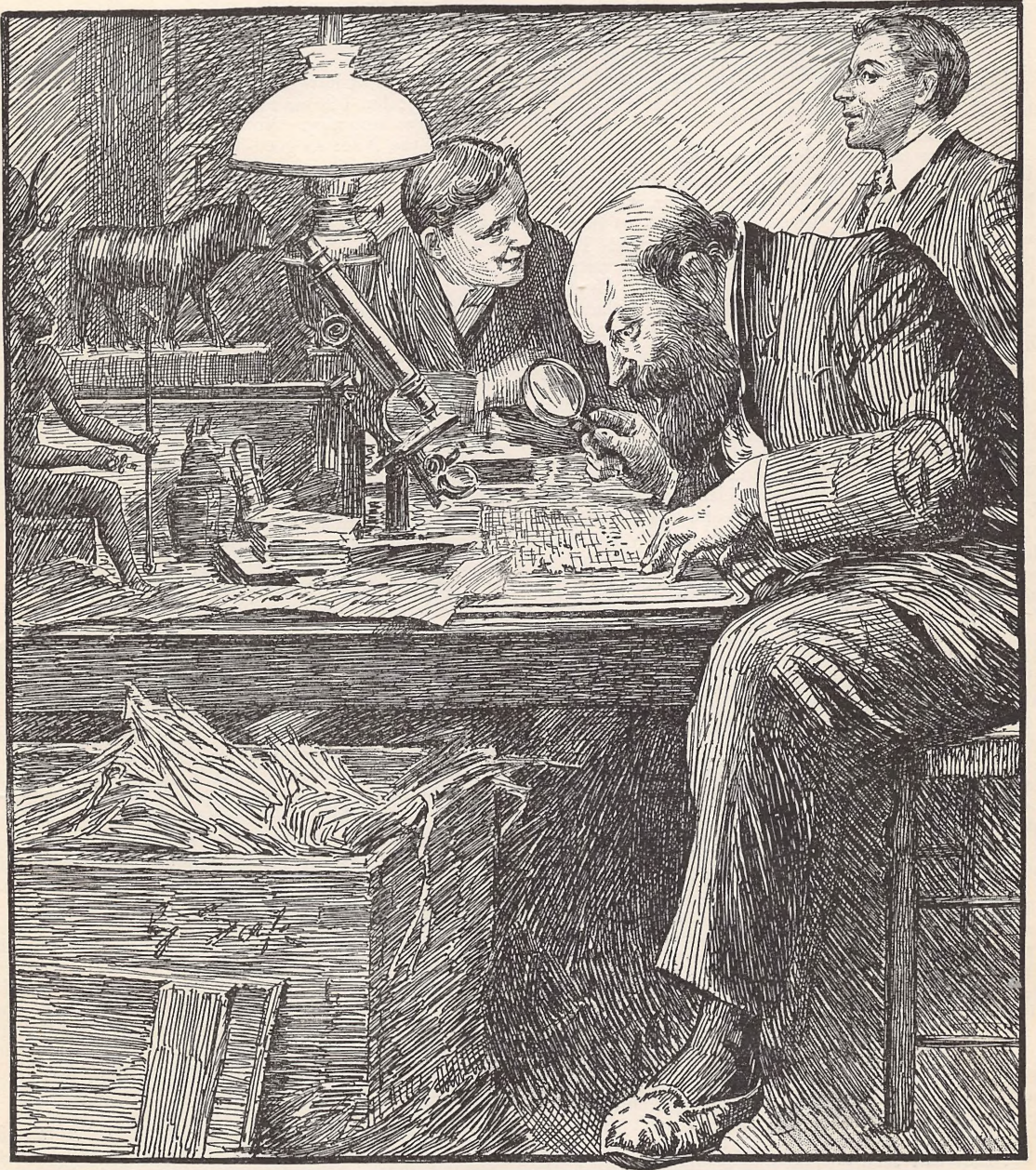
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CHATTERBOX.



"The real treasure was a mouldy bit of papyrus."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

CHAPTER I.

*Shepherd's Hotel,
Cairo, Egypt.*

DEAR FRED,—That was a red-letter day—the Friday we had the packing-case from Egypt. Dick thought it was something from his people in Gloucestershire. They generally send something about this time of year; but when we saw the foreign marks on it Dick said, 'Mummies.'

We had a lively evening unpacking, I can tell you. Uncle Charlie was excited. I believe he sat up all night gloating over the things. However, it wasn't till the next day that he opened out, and let us into the secret. 'Boys,' he said, 'this is treasure-trove! There's one thing in that case that money would not buy. Colonel Swain knows something about Egyptian antiquities, but he little knows the value of that fragment of papyrus. Now, I've got a big scheme in my head, if I can but work out the details.'

You see, it was like this. There were a lot of things in the case—pottery, little images, and metal and glass things; but the real treasure was a mouldy bit of papyrus, with Egyptian writing all over it. Of course, Uncle Charlie understands Egyptian hieroglyphics as well as he does English print, and he says this papyrus is a clue to the biggest find of ancient records that has been made for the last twenty years. If he can only trace where it came from, and if nobody has been before him! He says this is rather a big 'if'; but he has his hopes. 'Now, boys,' he went on, 'I've got a surprise for you. I have decided that we three will go to Egypt.' This was a sudden shock, I can tell you. I swallowed a brandy-ball I was sucking, and I thought Dick would have a fit. He danced a war-dance round the study. Uncle grinned and said, 'I have thought it all out—about school, and all that—and I have come to the conclusion that you will gain more than you will lose.'

Dick doesn't know how to be thankful enough, especially about school, after going through that sickening exam, and then getting plucked. He says that was all through being so nervous. We know all about that, don't we? Dick's being 'nervous' is rather good, when he hasn't got a single nerve in his whole body.

So that's how it was, and you know when once Uncle Charlie gets his steam up wild horses won't hold him, and once he has made up his mind he doesn't let the grass grow under his feet. We were off the following Wednesday. So, instead of looking you up at Chislehurst the Saturday before last, we were steaming up the Mediterranean.

Here we are, then, in Cairo; and here we have been for a week—it seems a month to us. Uncle Charlie has been interviewing all sorts of officials, buying stores and things, and making his preparations; and in two or three days we start up the Nile. I don't think we are going in a steamer, but in a sailing-boat—I forget what they call them—something beginning with a D. We have got no end of traps to take with us—a tent, and all manner of things. That reminds me. Can you send me three dozen more of those Rapid Plates? I

find I have only got four dozen left, and I shall soon use those. If you direct them here, I will manage to have them sent on somehow.

This is a fine hotel we are staying at, and full of all sorts of interesting people, too—mostly officers and globe-trotters. Colonel Swain—uncle's chum—comes in every day—he's jolly, but he is not coming with us. I wish he was.

I was going to tell you about Selim—he's our black boy. He isn't really black, you know—half and half. He is a treat.

Of course we have done the Pyramids, and all that sort of thing; but I haven't got time to tell you everything.

I must stop now. No more letter-writing when we get up the Nile: so good-bye. Don't forget the plates. Ever yours, HARRY.

The writer of this epistle folded it, directed an envelope and licked the gummed edge with apparent relish; not that the flavour was greatly to his taste, but because he had at last got this long-shirked letter off his mind. He was seated at a small round table beneath the verandah of Shepherd's Hotel. Opposite him, at a similar little round table, sat Dick, the friend alluded to in the letter as being without a single nerve in his whole body. Very cool and composed he looked in white jacket and straw hat, his elbows resting on the rail of the verandah, gazing serenely at the passers-by in the blazing sunshine, and gently whistling, 'Tarara-boom-de-ay!' 'Finished?' he inquired, turning at the grating of Harry's chair on the tiled floor. 'I thought you were writing a three-volume novel. Did you tell old Butterworth about Selim?'

'No, I didn't say much,' replied Harry.

'Well, he's a treat,' said Dick.

'That's just what I said in my letter.'

'Did you? Well, that's what I say. He's a regular t-r-e-a-t, treat. What do you think he has been doing now? He's been at that box of chocolates I brought. I caught him red-handed, so to speak.'

'What did you do?' laughed Harry.

'What did I do? I threw the whole lot of chocolates out of the window, and shook him till his ivory teeth rattled. He only grinned—he always grins—and said, "They nice, Mister Dick." He's a caution. What can you do with him? He's always good-tempered, and would do anything in the world for us, but he absolutely doesn't know the difference between right and wrong. He says it can't be helped, it's due to his bringing up. He's got negro blood in his veins, you can see—his mother, I suppose. His father was a Moslem, and he speaks English, and was brought up—more or less—in a Mission school. He says it can't be helped, because he doesn't know what he is, whether he's a heathen, a Turk, or a Christian. Sometimes he thinks he's one and sometimes he thinks he's another. I banged his head, and told him I wasn't a missionary myself, but I was going to make a Christian of him, and the first thing to be done was to make him honest.'

'Rather a pity about the chocolates, wasn't it?' said Harry.

'Well, they were getting jolly sticky,' Dick admitted, adding with emphasis, 'There he is now, in the street, picking those chocolates out of the gutter! Selim, you rascal!' he shouted, with an ominous rattle of the 'r,' but stopped on catching sight of two gentlemen nearing the hotel. 'The Professor and Colonel

Swain!' he exclaimed; 'now we shall have some news.'

The two men who were approaching at once caught the eye as a peculiar contrast in line and colour. The one with the full beard was the Professor—Uncle Charlie. He was short and stout—a study in curves. Not only his waistcoat, but his shoulders and his legs, were in graceful curves: whilst the Colonel—tall and thin—was a composition in straight lines. The former's rotundities were draped in a white flannel suit; the latter's angles were accentuated by a long grey frock-coat and trousers to match. A pith helmet covered the massive head of Uncle Charlie, whilst his companion wore a small fez, like an abbreviated stove-pipe. They were engaged in animated conversation, by far the larger share of which fell to the Professor, the Colonel nodding assent at regular intervals. Now and again the Professor would come to a standstill, as if his argument were too weighty to allow of tongue and legs working at the same time. Still conversing, they ascended the steps of the hotel.

(Continued on page 13.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

1.—CHARADE.

My first is a boon; though not always desired,
Sometimes on our earth it is greatly required.

My second, by Englishmen once used in fight,
Now often makes music our ears to delight.

My whole is so lovely, that when it appears
It follows my first like a smile after tears.

(Answer on page 34.)

E. D.

THE FRIENDS.

HERE is one of George Washington's earliest letters, written when he was a boy to a little friend of his whose name was Richard Henry Lee.

'DEAR DICKEY,

'I thank you very much for the pretty picture-book you gave me. Sam asked me to show him the pictures, and I showed him all the pictures in it; and I read to him how the tame elephant took care of the master's little boy, and put him on his back, and would not let anybody touch his master's little son. I can read three or four pages sometimes without missing a word. Mamma says I may go to see you and stay all day with you next week if it be not rainy. She says I may ride my pony Hero if Uncle Ben will go with me and lead Hero. I have a little piece of poetry about the picture-book you gave me, but I mustn't tell you who wrote the poetry.

"G. W.'s compliments to R. H. L.,
And likes his book full well;
Henceforth will count him his friend,
And hopes many happy days he may spend."

'Your good friend,

'GEORGE WASHINGTON.

'I am going to get a whip top soon, and you may see it and whip it.'

Less than half a century after writing this child's letter, George Washington stood before a vast assembly, and, with his hand on the Bible, took the oath as the first President of the United States. And as the people shouted, 'Long live George Washington, President of the United States!' the first person to clasp the President's hand was his lifelong friend, Richard Henry Lee.

Some one has truly said, 'Of all the things that make life worth living, friendship comes near the top.'

E. DYKE.

THE SOLDIER'S RED COAT.

ENGLISH soldiers on active service of course wear khaki, the brown colour of which is not easily seen at a distance. But in peace-time, red is the colour used for most uniforms. They have not always worn red coats, however. In 1367, and for some time after that date, they seem to have worn white, with the red cross of St. George on breast and back. At the battle of Agincourt, in 1415, few of the English archers, we are told, wore armour. Some had doublets only, and their hose was worn loose, in order to give them greater freedom of action. Their best head-pieces were caps of boiled leather and of wicker-work crossed with bands of iron. Only after long campaigning could the ordinary soldier provide himself with portions of defensive armour—when he had earned enough money to pay for it, or had captured it from the enemy.

During the Wars of the Roses, in which the combatants were all of one race and language, the chief distinction must have been the badges of the leaders. In 1461, some men in red coats were sent from Rye to the army of the 'King-maker,' the Earl of Warwick; and in 1470 fifteen men sent from Canterbury for the Calais garrison, and others for London, were fitted out with 'Jakettis' of red cloth. These jackets bore as badges 'roses of white karsey.'

The red-coated Yeomen of the Guard ('Beef-eaters') were instituted by Henry VII. as a kind of bodyguard, and were picked men, of whom one half were armed with bows, the other half with hand-guns. Fairfax, the great Parliamentary General, was the first to introduce a uniform garment for all his troops alike, and he chose the red colour.

WHAT I FOUND IN THE WOOD.

INTO the wood for my pleasure I went,
Seeking for nothing, on nothing intent.

There, in the shade, a small flower I spied:
Beautiful, bright, it looked up, starry-eyed.

Out went my hand; then I heard its voice say,
'Must I be broken, and wither away?'

Break it I did not, but took root and all:
In my fair garden the flower did instal:

Planted it there in a sweet, peaceful place,
Where it blooms still in all beauty and grace.

E. DYKE.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

I.—THE ROSE OF ENGLAND.

OF course all British readers of *Chatterbox* know that the Rose is the national flower of England, that the Thistle represents Scotland, the 'Leek' Wales, and the Shamrock Ireland. These facts 'grow up with us,' so to speak, and we do not inquire why these particular flowers should have come to occupy such prominent places among all the hundreds and thousands of other flowers. Some may say that of course the rose is the queen of all flowers, but then they are thinking of the beautiful garden roses of to-day, wonderful for size, form, colour, and scent. But our English rose, when it came to hold its national position, was only a *wild* rose, for in those days the science which has produced our fine garden roses was scarcely born.

Now the object of this series is to find out the history of the adoption of this Rose of England, the Thistle of Scotland, the Shamrock of Ireland, and also to inquire what are the flowers which represent our Colonies and



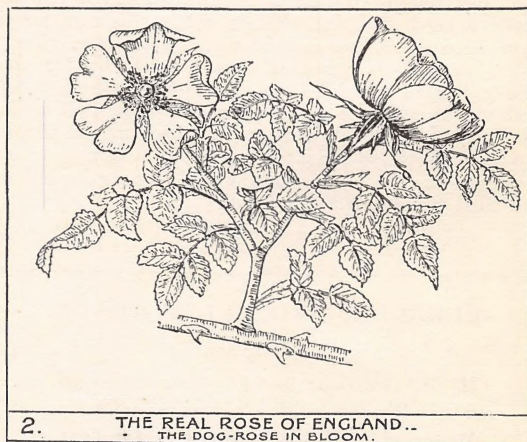
1. THE REAL ROSE OF ENGLAND..
THE DOG-ROSE IN BUD.

other nations. Besides this I shall try to tell you something about them from a botanical point of view, because they each have their own particular life-histories and peculiarities, and I want you to know them thoroughly *historically* and *botanically*. If you try to follow all I tell you about each national flower, as I know it (or can find out about it) in its *natural* state, and as I will show it to you in sketches, you will then understand how designs which depict such quaint, regular, stiff, formal-looking flowers came to be thus adapted from the various flowers. I am sure you will expect me to start with our own beloved English rose; after that I shall take Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and then as many of other countries as possible.

The Rose of England is founded on that dainty flower so common in our hedgerows in June, the dog rose (*Rosa canina*, to give it its official Latin title). It is of course one of the wild roses, and, I think, the prettiest of them. Great shoots rise from the hedges and bend over, carrying numbers of side-shoots each bearing its rose or roses. Fig. 1 shows you one of these side-shoots on its main stem. I drew this, as you see, when the roses were just showing their buds. The shoot has

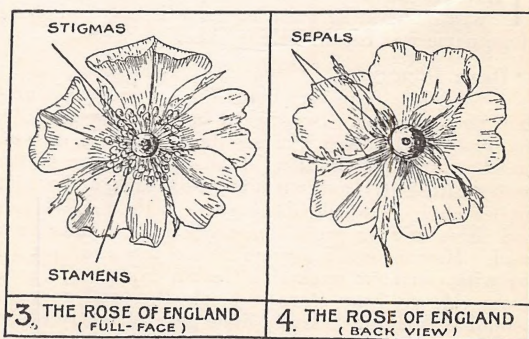
thrown out two separate branches, each bearing a rose. The buds are at present closely wrapped up in their leafy sepals; you can here too see the shiny container of the future seeds, which is beneath the flower. Fig. 2 shows you the same shoot in full bloom. I also show you in fig. 3 a full-face portrait of a flower, and at fig. 4 a back view.

It is the full-face flower I want you to study first (fig. 3). Here you see the five petals, which, as you will remember, are of the palest pink, each one having



2. THE REAL ROSE OF ENGLAND..
THE DOG-ROSE IN BLOOM.

a 'dent' in the middle of the outer edge. Also you will note that all of them are a bit inclined to turn over towards the centre of the flower. Between the petals you can see the leafy sepals just showing their tips. In the middle is a ring of yellow 'anthers' carried on delicate thread-like stems; these all are sitting on the edge of the seed vessel, and right in the

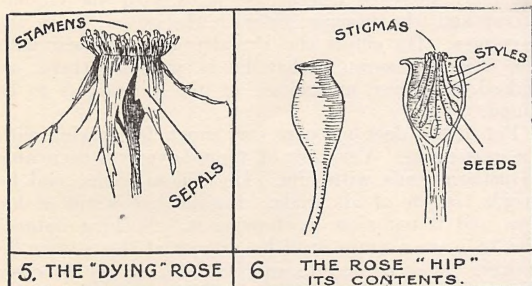


3. THE ROSE OF ENGLAND
(FULL-FACE)

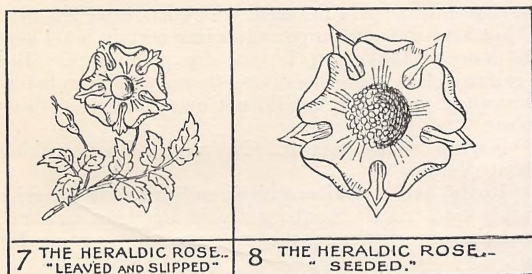
4. THE ROSE OF ENGLAND
(BACK VIEW)

middle are the tops of the pistils just poking out. You next get the effect shown in fig. 5. Eventually the stamens and sepals fall off, and the shiny green seed-container becomes the well-known bright scarlet 'hip' of autumn as shown in fig. 6. In this same illustration I also show you a section of a 'hip,' so that you can see the seeds in their home waiting for the chance of coming, by hook or by crook, to the ground, and continuing their species by developing into seedlings. So much for the botany of our rose.

Next as to the history of its adoption as an emblem of England. Well, apparently it was first used by Edward I. You must know that in these early days the servants of great families wore distinctive uniforms and also badges by which they could be recognised, so that if you met one in the street you would know to what family he belonged, just as now we, by their



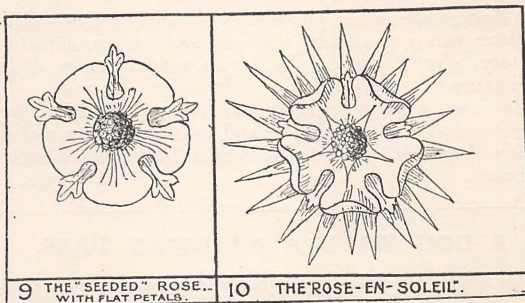
badges, can tell to what regiment a soldier belongs. It is not quite clear why Edward I. took a rose for his badge, but it is thought most likely that he adopted it in memory of his mother, Eleanor of Provence, who was known as the 'Rose of Provence.' As used by Edward I., it was a golden rose, and generally had a stalk and leaves as in fig. 7. This, in the strange old language of heraldry, is 'leaved and slipped.' You will here see the form of the rose of heraldry, its five petals



with edges turned over, its sepals (called 'barbs') showing between the petals, and the plain circle represents the top of the 'hip'; the leaves, buds, and stalk are always just natural. When the middle of the flower is represented as in fig. 8, it is said (in heraldry) to be 'seeded,' and if the 'seeds' are yellow and the sepals green, it is described quaintly as 'barbed and seeded proper.' Of course the 'seeds' are really the tops of the stigmas, and not seeds at all! But when the science of heraldry was at its height, not much was known of the science of flowers. Sometimes the petals are not incurved, as in fig. 9.

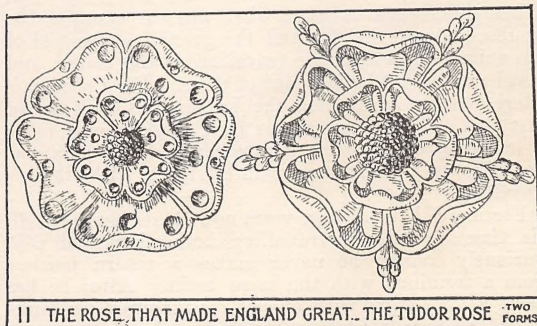
The use of the rose as a badge came very much to the fore in the Wars of the Roses, when the followers of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, took the white rose for their badge, and the followers of Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, took the red rose for theirs. How this choice came about is not certain—one account is the famous one used by Shakespeare in

Henry VI., Act ii. Sc. iv.—but as the livery colours of the house of Plantagenet were red and white, it does not seem a very great stretch of imagination to think that this fact, together with the fact that the golden rose was Edward I.'s badge, may have largely decided the choice. Very often the white rose of York appears surrounded by rays, as in fig. 10: it is then termed 'Rose-en-soleil'—'a rose within a sun.' Henry VII. made a rose one of his badges, calling it a Tudor Rose, but in this case it was really *two* roses, a white one within a red rose. The idea of this double rose was to show, in symbol, the end of the disputes of the Wars of the Roses cemented by the joining of the two houses of York and Lancaster by the marriage of the King with Elizabeth of York. Fig. 11 shows you two really good examples which I have drawn for you at Plas Mawr, in Conway, North Wales, where it is used extensively (as was the custom of Tudor times, in



which this house was built) as a decoration on ceilings and overmantels.

Henry VIII. continued the use of the badge in that condition, but Edward VI. (I believe at the time of some victory) again added the golden rays. Queen Elizabeth also kept the rose as one of her badges, but added a motto, 'Rosa sine spina' ('a rose without a thorn'); also 'Angliæ Gloria' ('The glory of England'). But these mottoes were not intended as praise of the rose, but of *herself*, she being the Rose!



Here I shall leave the Rose of England for the present, carrying it on with the Thistle of Scotland in my next article. There are many pretty legends about the rose, but I will only give you one here. At a monastery in Wiltshire there grew in the garden a rose-tree which, during the Wars of the Roses, bore

pure white roses on one branch and deep red ones on another. It is said that when the reconciliation took place between the two families, and ever after, it bore roses *striped* with red and white. There is even now a variety of rose which does this, and it is called the York and Lancaster rose.

E. M. BARLOW.

A QUICK-WITTED BEGGAR.

A True Incident.

A SHORT time ago a lady, walking in a London suburb, saw a caterpillar on the footpath, and, that it might not be trodden on, picked it up and dropped it gently into a garden.

Behind the lady were two young men, who saw what she did. They passed her, and she noticed that they seemed to be discussing something between themselves. Then one turned back and spoke to her.

'Madam,' he said, 'you were very kind to that caterpillar; will you also be kind to *me*? I am, unfortunately, out of work. Will you render me a little assistance?'

It is not good to beg, but one cannot help admiring the ingenuity of this beggar, and we may learn a useful lesson from his evident readiness to turn everything to account.

E. DYKE.

A DOG WITH A RAILWAY PASS.

THERE are tales of many a famous dog, but, perhaps, there is only one dog that is known to own a railway pass.

He has no master, and he wants no master. But he probably has more friends than any other dog in the world; for every one on the railway is his friend now. His name is Roxie; and on his collar is a brass tablet setting forth that he is an employee of the Long Island Railway in the United States of America; and it instructs all the railwaymen to let him travel on the trains.

This pass was given to the bull-terrier by order of the President of the railway company. One day he saw a guard trying to kick Roxie out of his private car. When the great man asked what was the cause of the trouble between the dog and the guard, he was told of the animal's fondness for travelling in the trains, and that he could not be kept out of them. The President's interest being aroused in the brown-eyed bull-terrier that had taken refuge at his feet, the dog was made welcome by him to his private car, and the pass was issued to prevent any more interference with Roxie's travelling.

For more than thirteen years now Roxie has spent all his time in railway travelling both night and day. Curiously enough he never makes a return journey from a terminus with the same train. After he has spent a little time with one of his favoured acquaintances—perhaps a station-master, a signalman, or a porter—he will take it into his head to meet a certain train. Immediately it stops at the station, Roxie jumps into a carriage, and curls himself up on a vacant seat, or, if there is none to be had, he quietly dozes on the floor until he arrives at his destination. The moment the name of his station is called out, up he jumps, and makes for the carriage-door.

After a visit of what he thinks is the proper length of time he gets into another train, and goes to another station. Sometimes he goes further along the line, and sometimes he returns in the direction from which he came. Roxie has been at every station along the entire railway many times; but he has never been known to go the entire length of the line in one journey.

As a passenger the bull-terrier's tastes are very wide. He does not care whether he rides with the engine-driver and the fireman, or with the guard, or in the carriages. He enters the President's private car with the utmost assurance that he is welcome there, or, indeed, wherever an official of the railway is to be found.

But Roxie does not care very much for mixing with the passengers. Very few of them have ever been able to make friends with him. He seldom barks, and he avoids trouble of all kinds. But he has a will of his own, and is not slow in showing it. Nothing induces him to leave a train until he arrives at the station he desires. It is useless to call to him, or try to coax him out.

Many people have tried to win his friendship with eatables and failed. Roxie can get all he wants to eat and drink at any town on the railway system.

Sometimes a stranger, after being told the dog's history, imagines Roxie must be changing his place of abode on account of the scarcity of food, and pays a servant in a hotel to give the dog something to eat. The waiter may think that after the guest is out of sight he can pocket the money and leave the dog to hunt for his dinner. But Roxie knows differently. Perhaps it is through long experience that the animal recognises what has passed between the two, and he will haunt that servant until he gets the meal which has been left him.

Not long ago a coloured waiter in a certain hotel kept the money, thinking to let the dog go hungry. But a railway clerk, who was dining there, asked him before the others at table if he did not owe Roxie something to eat.

'No, sah,' replied Sambo. 'Not me! I know nothing about that dog!'

'Roxie,' said the railway clerk, calling the bull-terrier to his side, 'didn't Sambo get paid for your dinner?'

And the dog confirmed the statement by wagging his tail.

'No, sah, not me!' said the waiter, boldly. 'It must have been de other waiter got that money.'

'Who is to feed you, Roxie?' asked the railway man.

To the astonishment of the diners, the bull-terrier at once rubbed himself against the legs of the waiter, as if saying, 'You're quite correct! This is the man!'

The waiter then owned up, and Roxie got his dinner.

Only one other dog has ever become so familiar a sight to many thousands. It was King Edward the Seventh's favourite terrier Cæsar, that always went about with him. But Roxie of the L.I.R. has outlived him.

TWO BOTTLES.

Founded on Fact.

ANGELA tried to count her shells for the third time. They were lying in a heap in the lap of her brown-holland overall, and she spread them out slowly on the sand at her side, then looked up hopelessly as again her brother's voice upset her calculations.

'I have thought of a splendid joke to play on Percy.'

'Eleven,' murmured Angela, below her breath, then she stopped, and the limpet-shell in her hand waited for a long time before it joined its fellows. What was Max saying? He was sitting on the beach some little way off, but his voice carried quite clearly over the distance.

'It's an advertisement,' he explained to Muriel, who was stretched on the sand beside him. 'Father read about it in the paper this morning. Some firm, to advertise something, have thrown a whole lot of bottles into the North Sea, and in each one there's a paper, which you can send to some place in London, and they give you quite a big prize.'

'How exciting!' said Muriel.

'So Percy seems to think,' replied Max. 'He has been walking up and down the shore all the morning, and now he's sitting on the jetty with a telescope. That's what made me think of the joke.'

'What is it?' asked Muriel, quickly.

'Don't you see? Why, I thought we would get an old bottle, and tie it round with string, like the advertisement ones, and throw it in off the Pier this afternoon when the tide's coming in—'

'And make Percy watch from the shore!' put in Muriel, excitedly.

The rest of the conversation was lost to Angela, as a band, which had camped down quite near where she was sitting, suddenly struck up an inspiring march, and the little girl soon gathered her shells into her pinafore, and walked away along the beach. In her mind resentment burned hotly against her elder brother and sister. It seemed so cruelly unfair that Percy should be chosen as the victim of all their jokes, just because he was the youngest, and not as well able to stand up for himself as the others. Would it be dishonourable to tell him what she had overheard? Angela stood quite still, and as she stared perplexedly before her, something on the jetty in the distance caught her eye. It was only a solitary little figure in a sailor suit, balancing a telescope on the railing; but in an instant her mind was made up, and she started running along the beach towards him.

Two sand castles reared their heads in magnificence on the shore that afternoon, and Angela and Percy looked up with modest pride, as their father's voice hailed them from the promenade. 'Splendid castles!' he shouted to Angela. 'I'm coming down to have a look at them!' and a moment later he had made his way on to the sands, and was standing beside the children.

It was then that Angela caught sight of the little dark object bobbing up and down in the water, quite near the shore, and she gave Percy an excited nudge, as her father turned away to collect some stones.

'Come on, Percy! Ducks and Drakes!' he cried.

The little boy smiled gleefully at the sight of the bottle dancing on the waves, then, as he turned to follow his father, he felt a detaining hand on his arm.

'Percy, supposing Father sees it!' Angela said anxiously. 'He'd be so angry with Max if he found out!'

Even as she said the words Major Savile called again to Percy, and the children saw him stooping to unlace his boots.

'The advertisement bottle!' he said excitedly, as Angela's flying footsteps brought her to his side.

The little girl began to speak rather breathlessly. 'It isn't the bottle, Father! It's a sham one. Someone's thrown it off the Pier for a joke. It's nothing, really.'

Major Savile paused, with a boot in mid-air, and stared in annoyance from the dancing object in the water to the flushed little face looking so anxiously into his. 'It can't have come from the Pier,' he said. 'It's nowhere near—'

'Oh, Father, it truly has,' interrupted Angela. 'I know—I heard some one say so.'

She stopped confusedly, and stood by in silence as her Father laced up his boots, and climbed up the steps to the promenade. Then she turned to join Percy, who was ornamenting the walls of his fortress with a pattern of stones. A sound of racing footsteps above them made both children look up, and a moment later a flying figure leapt almost over their heads, and landed unceremoniously in the moat of Angela's castle. Apparently unconscious of the damage he had done, the boy picked himself up without a word, and rushed headlong towards the sea. He did not even stop to remove his boots, but charged into the water towards the bottle, wading out far above his waist before he came within reach of it. Angela and Percy watched spellbound as he emerged, dripping but triumphant, and pulling a heavy clasp-knife from his pocket, began cutting the string from the neck of the bottle.

'I'm afraid it's a sham,' said Percy breathlessly.

The boy only grinned. He was carefully unfolding a sheet of paper, which was in the bottle, and a moment later he held it up for the children to see. 'No sham here,' he said. 'I shall be getting three pounds if I send this to London.'

For a minute Angela felt dazed, and everything seemed to swim before her eyes. 'Oh, Percy, if it hadn't been for me—' she began, unsteadily.

A little brown hand slipped consolingly into hers. 'He wouldn't have got the prize,' Percy finished bravely. 'And I'm sure he wants it more than I do.'

The two were sitting at tea at the schoolroom table when Muriel and Max rushed excitedly into the room.

'What *has* happened? What's this about the bottle?' began Max. 'We saw Father on the promenade, and he said he'd have got it, only Angela stopped him, and he seemed dreadfully cross.'

Angela's lip trembled, but she looked up bravely. 'It was all my fault,' she said. 'It—it serves me right for being dishonourable. I heard you and Max talking on the beach yesterday, and I—I told Percy. So we thought the bottle to-day was only a sham one.'

'And—and you didn't tell Father it was our fault!' put in Muriel, staring at the wistful little face with wide, astonished eyes. 'Oh, Angela—it was ripping of you! But he shall know now!'

'The joke's been a miserable failure, anyhow,' said Max. 'We had to pay twopence each to go on the Pier, and when I chucked the bottle in, it broke against the side, and sank.'

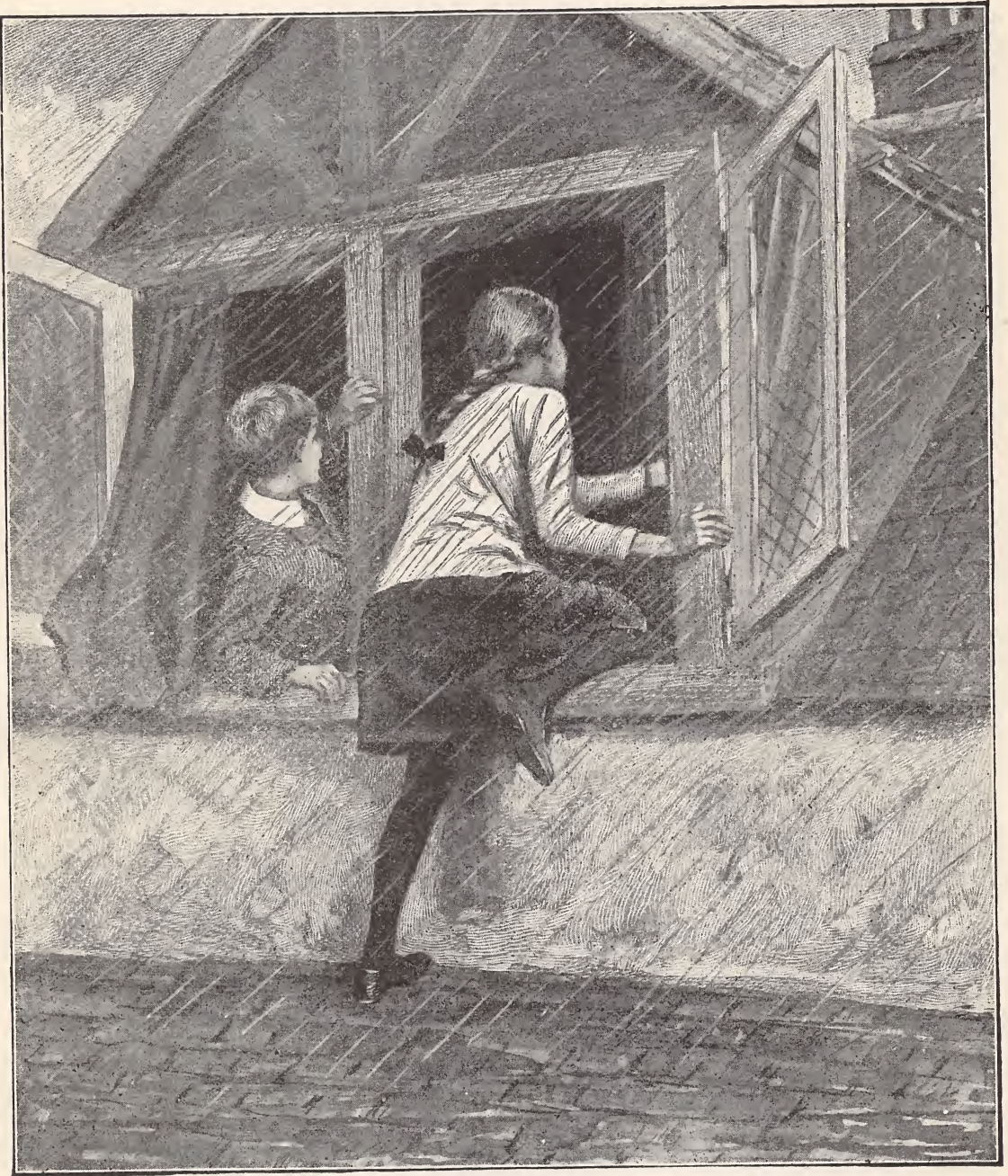
'There's Father!' said Muriel suddenly, as a door banged in the distance. 'Come on, Max! We will tell him at once!'

And before Angela could speak, they had raced past her, and were clattering down the schoolroom stairs.

V. V.



"A sheet of paper was in the bottle."



“Scrambling across the window-sill of the strange attic.”

AMONG THE CHIMNEY-POTS.

FOR some minutes Jean struggled vainly with the handle of the nursery door, then she turned desconsolately to break the news to Roger. 'It's locked!' she said. 'Nurse is a regular old beast.'

Roger did not seem to hear her remark, for, as he knelt on the high window-sill, he only craned his neck still further over the iron bars into the sunshine. Then he looked round suddenly.

'Jean, I have thought of the most splendid revenge, and we can have quite an exciting afternoon after all.'

Jean's face lit up with renewed hope. 'How? What can we do?' she asked excitedly.

'We can climb right out of the window, on to the roof,' replied Roger. 'Do you see? It will be quite easy after we have got past this narrow bit. Then we can spend the whole afternoon out there, and climb about the chimney-pots; and *think* what a fright Nurse will be in when she unlocks the door at tea-time, and finds us gone.'

Jean's eyes sparkled with excitement, but she looked rather anxiously at the very narrow foothold that would have to be crossed before the width of the roof was reached. Then her glance fell to the pavement below, which seemed suddenly to have grown very far away.

Roger saw her shrink backwards, and looked down scornfully. 'You aren't afraid, are you?' he said.

'Of course not,' replied Jean stoutly, looking again across the narrow ledge to the roof beyond. 'You go first, and I'll follow.'

The little girl's face was very white as she climbed over the iron bars that crossed the window, and clung in terrified silence to the gutter. There was a moment of suspense, then she was safely beside Roger on the leads.

'Isn't it lovely!' he exclaimed, as he began sprawling up a sooty chimney-stack. 'Do come up here, Jean; it's such fun. Oh, I wish this was our own house, instead of seaside lodgings, so that we could come and play here always.'

The time passed very quickly as the children explored the long stretch of leads, climbing perilous heights, and inventing many new and exciting games. They were absorbed in one of these when the sky suddenly darkened, and two big splashes made Jean look up anxiously.

'Roger, it's going to pour. We shall have to go in.'

Already the heavy rain was beginning, and Roger jumped to his feet, and led the way back to the attic window of their nursery. Jean followed him slowly, trembling at the thought of the dangerous journey back; then, as she reached the narrow ledge, she heard Roger's voice calling to her.

'What are we to do? The window's shut, and I can't open it!'

Jean ran forward anxiously. 'It can't be fastened,' she called in reply. 'It can only have blown to in the wind.'

'Yes, but I can't open it. The catch must have slipped.'

In another moment Roger had retraced his steps, and the two dripping little figures stood looking at each other despairingly, as the heavy rain descended in torrents.

'Come along,' said Roger. 'We will go and stand by that big chimney-stack, and it will shelter us a bit.'

He led the way along the front of the roof, then suddenly darted forward, and a moment later an excited, eager face was turned to Jean.

'It's all right; we can get back. I never thought of it before. Through the window of the next-door house.'

Jean's glance followed the direction in which he was pointing, and she saw the neighbouring attic window standing wide open, with the raindrops chasing each other down the leaded panes.

'Supposing some one should see us,' she said anxiously.

But Roger did not hear her remark, as he had already climbed on to the narrow foothold, and, before she realised what she was doing, Jean found herself close at his heels, scrambling across the window-sill of the strange attic.

A moment later they slid to the ground, and Jean looked up in terror as a frightened scream rose from the corner of the room, where a little boy was sitting up in bed in his night shirt.

'Hush! It's all right,' she said. 'We got out of our nursery window next door on to the roof, and now it's shut and we can't get back, so we want to go through your house.'

'Do you think any one will see us?' put in Roger anxiously; 'because we don't want our nurse to know.'

The little boy shook his head. 'You must run quickly,' he said; 'my nurse may come in.'

Without waiting for further warning, the two crept through the doorway and down the stairs. The first landing was safely passed, and they had nearly reached the hall, when the sound of voices made them draw back hurriedly and take shelter behind a heavy window curtain.

'I expect you will find that they have not gone far,' some one was saying. 'Certainly no children have been in my garden, and my little boy is in bed with chicken-pox, so he will not have seen them.'

Then, as a familiar voice came in reply, Jean clutched her brother's arm, and both children held their breath as they listened.

'Thank you very much indeed, ma'am. I'm sure I hope they can't have come to any harm. Their mother is coming here to-night, and they weren't to know about it till tea-time. I was going—'

But Nurse never finished her sentence, for a curtain above her suddenly unfolded, and two excited figures came scampering down the staircase.

'Oh, Nurse! Mother isn't coming really, is she?' cried Jean.

Nurse flung up her hands in astonishment. 'Why, where have you come from? And you're both soaking wet!' she exclaimed in a horrified voice.

'I expect we shall both get chicken-pox,' said Roger complacently; 'because we have been talking to the little boy upstairs.'

It was some minutes before everything was explained, and the children felt very penitent when Nurse told them that she had purposely kept them indoors that afternoon, so that they would not be tired before the long walk to the station. And still more did they regret their afternoon's adventure some days later, when they lay tucked up in their beds, their faces looking like lobsters as they peeped out from among the blankets.

'It's spoilt all our holidays having chickenpox,' Roger remarked gloomily; 'and the worst of it is that it's mostly my fault.'

'It's just as much mine,' answered Jean readily; 'but I'm never going to try to have a revenge on Nurse again—are you, Roger?'

'No—never!' came a decided voice from the next room. 'Good night!' V.

THE LILY.

O PERFECT lily, purity serene!

Thy wondrous beauty is beyond compare.
Thine is the right alone to reign as Queen,

For Heaven itself holds not a flower more fair!

What is't about thee seems to speak of rest,
Symbol of silence?—why is thy voice so still,

And yet why can I understand it best

Of all the voices that my being thrill?

Oh, let the rose—a vain though lovely Queen—

That hath usurped thy just and rightful crown

Blush red for very shame when thou art seen,

Her head before thine innocence bend down!

A great example I in thee behold—

Thy spotless bosom veils a heart of gold!

VALENTINE GILBERT.

GUSTAVE DORÉ'S PROCESSION.

'**W**HAT is it?' 'What can it be?' 'Quick, my children, here comes a procession: let us run and see it!' 'What beautiful cars, each with its proper banner; and look, they are filled with boys!' 'Ah, yes, I could have told you so; there, in front, marches little Gustave Doré; one may be sure that the boy is at the bottom of the whole affair. Never was such a lad for inventing new pastimes.'

The spectators chatted in this fashion, while the procession proceeded on its way with dignity round the grand old Cathedral of Strasburg. The four cars drawn by boys were well worth looking at, and quite a crowd collected. The townsfolk came out of their shops; the passers-by stopped to gaze and smile, even the beggars at the Cathedral doors hobbled from their posts. A short time before there had been a grand procession of the City Guilds, and these ambitious schoolboys had actually tried to copy it.

It was Gustave Doré's idea, to do something in honour of the head master's birthday; the boys had only forty-eight hours in which to arrange everything, but never was such a worker and organizer as little Gustave. His brother Ernest, and the two young Kratzes, their school-chums, were always willing to follow where Gustave, bubbling over with fun and cleverness, led the way; the other boys, too, had complete faith in him.

'We must have four cars,' announced Gustave, excitedly, 'representing the printers, coopers, gardeners, and glass-stainers. You, Ernest,' to his brother, 'shall lead the printers, while I will be at the head of the glass-stainers. Then I will paint four banners; but first of all, we must ask our parents to help us to procure four stout chariots.'

As the lads were all sons of well-to-do citizens, practical assistance was soon forthcoming, and Gustave

at once began to work like a young fury. He decorated the cars at headlong speed, splashing on the paint with a fine eye to effect. Next, the indefatigable young artist painted the four banners, each two yards long and one broad; and you must remember that each flag had to have the proper craft symbols on it. So Gustave painted newspapers on the printers' banner, barrels and tools on the carpenters', while his own was a veritable triumph. The boy actually copied the ancient lantern of the real Glass-stainers' Guild, and, underneath it, painted one of the beautiful stained-glass windows in the Cathedral he loved so dearly. It was a real triumph.

Gustave was also the stage-manager of the little company; he drilled his school-mates, told them how to dress themselves so as to look as much as possible like craftsmen of olden times; and he himself led the procession, clad in the garb of a mediæval artist. The trimmings of his big flapping hat might have been paper, but the effect was excellent all the same.

At intervals the leader made a sign, and the cars stopped; the craftsmen then pretended to work at their various trades. How the crowd laughed and cheered when the gardeners made up little bouquets and threw them to the spectators, and the printers printed scraps of news, and tossed the papers right and left. As for Master Gustave Doré, he made lightning sketches with a grand air, and flung them to the people. Happy those who secured one of these, though little did they dream what a name the little boy in the quaint costume was to make for himself in the future.

Presently the procession drew up before the school-house: the hero of the hour made a long speech, and presented the four banners to the head master, who stood there with his family and who was delighted with them. So pleased indeed was he with the way Gustave had carried out his idea, that he told the boy frankly that he would certainly become a great painter.

There were others, too, who recognised that the city would one day be immensely proud of this fantastic little son of hers. Gustave's mother always declared that her boy was a genius, and would do great things; but his father, and a beautiful and clever old grandmother who lived with the family, did not think much of the sketches Gustave was for ever making. Perhaps this was a good thing: he might have become too conceited about them. But draw the child must! Nothing could keep him from it; at school he decorated his exercises, and copy-books, and the margins of his books; and after awhile the masters left off telling him not to do it.

Anything queer and out of the common attracted Gustave, and he had a marvellous memory. If he saw an old crone who looked like a witch in the street, or a hump-backed porter, or simply a person with a long crooked nose, you may be sure the pencil burned in his pocket to draw them. When the boy was eight he hurt his right arm, and had to stay in bed. Then, nothing would do but Françoise, their old nurse, must get him a large piece of board, and prop him up, so that he might go on drawing with his left hand.

The little lad, when he grew up, became known, not only as a painter, but as one of the greatest of illustrators; and many a time did he introduce into the pictures he drew for books, bits taken from the splendid Cathedral, under whose shadow he spent his happy childhood's years.

S. BRAINE.



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ME?

A Study from Life.



"These were prisoners of war taken in the Soudan."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 3.)

'WELL, boys,' exclaimed the Colonel as they caught his eye, 'so you are going to leave us. The Professor tells me that all's settled, and you start up

the river on Wednesday. You'll have a grand time: I wish I was making one of the party.'

'So do we!' echoed the boys together.

The Colonel looked at them steadily with one of his quiet smiles, for despite his six feet of military stiffness, the Colonel had one of the gentlest faces in the world, and even the fiercely-pointed moustache could not disguise the kindly lines of the mouth.

'Yes, I should like to go with you and I think I

deserve a holiday, but we're very busy getting supplies to the Front, and it can't be done. You must know, lads, I never was a boy myself—not a real boy. I never had the chance, or I hadn't got it in me, and now, after forty years' experience, I think, in favourable circumstances, I could become a real boy. If the "powers that be" would say, "Colonel, will you kindly take a holiday for the benefit of your health?" I'd fling up my cap, don a flannel suit, and rush off with you to dig in the sand with the Professor, or help Harry here hunt creepy-crawlies for his collection.'

'We should indeed be glad to have the Colonel with us,' said Uncle Charlie. 'Perhaps he will be able to join us later on: at least we will hope so. You don't know how much he has done for me in getting permits and that sort of thing. I doubt if we should ever have got started up the river if it hadn't been for him. All the steamers are full up with officers and horses, and the dahabeeyahs when not chartered by the Government are full of military stores. However, we start on Wednesday, as the Colonel says, in a dahabeeyah—a sailing-boat, you know—one of those vessels with enormous yards and sails. I have bought a small sailing-boat, too, which will come in useful. It will be towed behind and all our traps will be packed into it—tent, beds, waterproof sheets, blankets, provisions, and tools. The dahabeeyah will land us this side of Wady Halfa, about twelve miles from our first camping-ground. You must run through that list of stores for me, Colonel, and see if I have forgotten anything,' he added, turning to his friend. 'And now, boys, you'll have to get all your odds-and-ends together. There will be two cases, not too big, for carrying; the rest will go in bags. Everything must be on board on Tuesday night. The Colonel and I won't be in to lunch to-day. We have to compare notes about something at the Boulak Museum. You must amuse yourselves as best you can till the evening. If you go anywhere outside the town you had better take Selim with you, and don't get into mischief.'

Before the seniors were well out of sight the boys had made up their minds to an expedition to the Mokattam Hills, and within the hour were sauntering down Muski Street, which runs south-east from the Ezbekiyeh—the principal square of Cairo. Their pockets were bulging with sandwiches, and their hearts were gay. Selim walked behind, carrying Harry's camera and a small basket.

Dick and Harry were not brothers, but cousins—both orphans, brought up together by the benevolent Uncle Charlie, who had been both father and mother to them. They were of nearly the same age, Dick being sixteen and Harry a few months younger. Any one would have taken Dick to be the elder by a couple of years. He was half a head taller than Harry, broad-shouldered, had plenty of confidence—an air of 'here I am, take me as you find me,' which was really not conceit, but the natural expression of a frank and simple nature. Harry, too, was a well-set-up boy, not wanting in manliness of character, but keener in his sensibilities and more reserved than Dick. His bent was towards quiet pursuits and his hobbies of the moment were natural history and the use of the camera.

Under the guidance of Selim they had exhausted—or thought they had exhausted—the sights of Cairo. The mosques and monasteries, the bazaars and markets, the picturesque, narrow, crooked, dirty streets of Old Cairo:

and the still more picturesque shop-keepers, street-vendors, and veiled women of the native quarters who looked as though they had stepped from the pages of the *Arabian Nights*; though they still found plenty of interest in the suburb of Bouiak, with its busy port. They were now bound for the Citadel and the Mokattam Hills.

The sun shone fiercely, and there was absolutely no shade when they got beyond the city streets.

'Phew! it is warm,' exclaimed Harry. 'But not so hot as I expected it would be in Egypt.'

'Just so,' said Dick, 'but it's early in the year yet, you must remember. Wait till mid-summer comes, and the hot winds from the desert. We shall be pretty well grilled then. What do you say, Selim?'

'English boys no good when it hot and the Khamasin blow from desert. They stop in house with the ladies and drink lemonade,' said Selim, with a twinkle in his eye.

'Get out!' exclaimed Dick. 'English boys can stand anything that Egyptian boys can.'

'Selim know English boy—very nice boy—him give backsheesh to Selim every day—very nice boy—when Khamasin blow, he not eat—he thin like telegraph stick—his knees shake—he go about with mouth open, choking for breath. Then Samum (sand-storm) come and finish him. Nose full of sand—ears full of sand—mouth full of sand. Him swallow sand all day—full up. Hakim (doctor) not able to help—him done for.'

Selim grinned with enjoyment at his own invention, and Dick turned with a sniff of contempt to help Harry with his camera.

They were standing near the Moslem cemetery. Before them on the crest of the hill rose the impressive pile of the Citadel, crowned by the beautiful mosque of Mohammed Ali, with its graceful minarets.

The lads soon mounted to the gates of the Citadel, presented their 'open sesame' in the shape of a pass from Colonel Swain, and were conducted all over the fortress, with the exception of the Khedive's palace. The gun foundry seemed to interest them most, with its steam hammer and glow of molten metal. Selim's eyes almost started from their sockets, for though he was familiar with every corner of Cairo, he had never been to the Citadel before, and had never dreamed of this Cyclopean workshop.

At no great distance from the Citadel they encountered a gang of men at work. Apparently they were constructing a branch to join the great main road to the Pyramids. There was something about the lithe active figures and the black skins of these men that impressed the boys. An Egyptian soldier with rifle and fixed bayonet stood guard at each end of the line, and when Selim told them that these were prisoners of war taken in the Soudan, when Osman Digna was defeated at Afait three years before, they saw that for once he was speaking the truth, and they stood for some time watching the silent workers. Most of them wore turbans, and were dressed in white, their garments gathered round them to allow free play of the limbs; but some were stripped to the waist, looking like bronze statues in action. Others showed unmistakably the dark patches of the Mahdist uniform. There was a strength and dignity in their carriage not to be seen in a gang of criminal convicts. Never a word was spoken as they plied pickaxe and mattock, or levered masses of stone, or shouldered baskets of the

loose soil. Occasionally one or another would look up and regard the boys with a steady gaze. These dervishes of the Soudan were a fine type of untamed man, and it was some time before the boys could throw off the spell of quietness which the sight had produced.

(Continued on page 23.)

MR. GERMAIN'S TRAMPS.

AGATHA had been wondering all through lunch what the boys were giggling at. It was a curious thing that they could behave perfectly well when there was no one but herself and their father in the room, but as soon as a guest arrived must needs begin to giggle and whisper. Once she caught a snatch of the conversation—

'Come into the study afterwards and try them on,' and a fresh burst of giggling.

It was against her code to pry upon them, so when she passed through the hall and heard muffled merriment, she did not go into the study; she contented herself with saying through the door, 'I suppose you boys will be punctual for tea? Sally is making a big currant scene.'

'Oh, rather, yes!' answered Gerald. 'At least, if we are a *tiny* bit late, will it matter much? We're not going very far, are we, Fred?'

They were glad to hear Agatha's footsteps dying away. They had got too far with their plans to wait for her to come into the study.

Fred was standing with a man's pair of old trousers on, and was engaged in unstitching the ends with a pocket knife, so that they might have a ragged appearance. Gerald was tugging at the hair of his small sister's doll, trying to detach it from the skull. 'I will have a beard under my chin,' he chuckled. 'I think, as this doll's such a hairy Aino, I can make a lovely pair of side-whiskers for you, Fred.'

Freeing the hair from the top of the unfortunate doll's head, he arranged some of it as a 'goatee' beard, covered the inside with 'seccotine,' and stuck it on his chin. 'It's not nice, all this glue,' he observed. 'What a sight you look, Fred!'

Fred's costume was nearly complete. A little stuffing to alter his figure, a man's shirt, and a little warm wax rolled into a ball and stuck on his cheek to represent a boil, had entirely altered the boy. He fixed on his whiskers, combed his hair over his forehead, and put on a squashy old felt hat. Then, Gerald having hurried into his clothes, which were of the same description, they peeped gingerly out of the long French windows to see if any one was about. No one. With a bound they had reached the cover of the rose-walk, hastening along it as fast as two pairs of the oldest boots belonging to their elders that they had found would let them. In the high road beyond they stopped to breathe.

The proceedings had all been hatched since breakfast that morning, when their father had, rather imprudently, remarked on the meanness and ostentation of a very rich man, their nearest neighbour.

'I know before I ask that he won't help to send away that cripple child,' he said. 'That sort of thing is not in his line. There is no audience, you see.'

'But we must get another sovereign soon,' said

Agatha. 'It won't do him any good when the weather gets cold and wet.'

Gerald, whose active mind was always ready with a wild scheme, had suddenly thought of a glorious possibility. He and Fred would spoil Mr. Germain's tennis party that afternoon by coming into the midst of it dressed and disguised as tramps. From fear of a scene and love of show, he felt sure Mr. Germain would give them money. Fred fell in with the idea with ardour.

Walking in the middle of the road, so that they would get as dusty as possible, they were not sorry when they came to the great gates of The Grange. Slipping through them they dodged between the big trees for fear of watchful gardeners. There was a thick shrubbery away on the right, and stealthily, with many glances backwards, they made for this. It led through a wealth of rhododendrons and azaleas to a sequestered part of the garden from which, keeping beside a wall of giant trees, they could emerge unexpectedly upon the tennis court.

Gerald paused at the end of the shrubbery to give last instructions. 'Mind you bluster,' he said firmly. 'And remember, if you smile we're absolutely done. If you want to giggle, have it out now.'

'I can't,' Fred declared. 'My whiskers would come off. Don't look at me, and I shall be all right.'

They crept along the wall and rounding a corner, came upon a group of people watching a set already in progress.

'Good gracious, look at this!' a lady cried, staring at them. 'What impertinence, coming right into the gardens!'

'Can you help us, lady? We've got a little boy to send to the sea, lady, and he's a cripple. Doctor's ordered sea, lady.'

Gerald's voice was cleverly hoarse. The truth, put in this way, was the best thing he could have done. The ladies looked at each other.

'Where do you come from?' asked one, sharply.

'How do you expect us to believe you?'

'We're often in these parts, lady. We was born hereabouts. It's true wot I'm telling you,' raising his voice, angrily. 'Doubt a chap's word, I suppose? Call yourself a lady?' He continued muttering.

Fred caught sight of Mr. Germain's portly form approaching them. He began in a different key.

'Little boy's awful bad, lady. We can't do nothing, 'cept let him die. Blessings on you if you'll help a poor man and his brother—'

'What on earth are you doing, trespassing here? Be off at once, or I'll send for some one to remove you!' Mr. Germain's voice was furious. He glared at them.

'Give us something to help the crippled child we're telling the lady about,' Gerald moved a step or two towards the ladies in a threatening way. They backed uncomfortably.

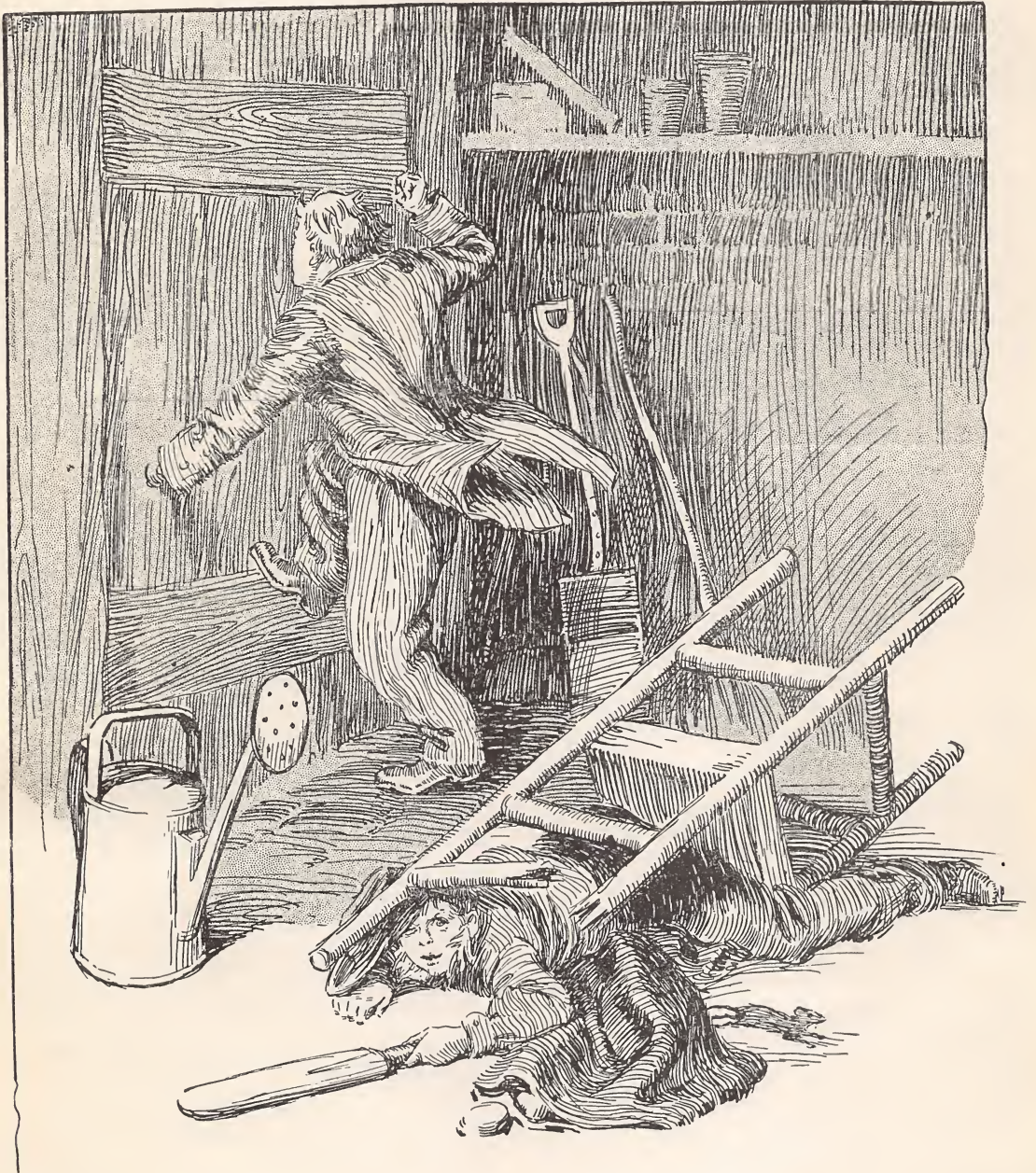
'I believe the man is speaking the truth,' said one, who had not spoken before. 'I think I would like to help the poor child to go to the sea.' She handed Gerald half-a-crown.

'Oh, if you know the history of it all, that's a different thing.' Mr. Germain rattled a number of coins in his pocket, and ostentatiously produced a sovereign. 'Here you are, but mind you *do* send your boy to the sea now. And if I catch you trespassing again, I'll have you brought up before the magistrate.'

(Concluded on page 18.)



“ ‘What impertinence, coming right into the gardens!’ ”



"They were prisoners."

MR. GERMAIN'S TRAMPS.

(Concluded from page 15.)

MR. GERMAIN waved the boys away with an imperious gesture. Nothing loath, they made the most of their chance of escape, retracing their steps along the fruit wall with all speed. They were trembling with suppressed excitement. Fred began to laugh.

'Shut up!' commanded Gerald. 'He will send some one after us, to see if we really go.'

The warning was only just in time. A footman appeared from the road-end of the shrubbery, waiting for them. Fred made a manful effort, and they limped along in silence, but with their boots almost dragging them back at every step, and the footman's eyes upon them, it was a trying minute. Safely at length they passed him, walked across the gravel-sweep in front of the house and out at the big gates. A quarter of a mile down the road, hidden from every one, and, lying in the grass under a hedge of honeysuckles, they had their laugh out.

'I knew we'd do it!' triumphantly declared Gerald. 'One pound two-and-sixpence. Won't Father and Agatha be pleased?'

Presently, remembering the currant scone, and Agatha's injunction to them not to be late for tea, they got up and walked at the best pace they could muster down the road. Indifferent now to discovery, they went up the lawn on arrival at home. No one was there.

'I think I will get out my bat. I want to oil it after tea,' said Fred.

So they went into the shed, where all the games and odds-and-ends were kept. Hardly had Fred reached down his bat from the shelf at the further end when the door was slammed, and they heard the bolt shot.

'Hi! hullo! What are you doing?' shouted Gerald, running to it, and banging on the door with his fists. There was no answer. Absolute quiet outside. This is *too* absurd! We are locked in our own shed,' he said. 'I wonder who saw us going in? They were jolly sharp about it.'

Fred, who in a rush to the door had slipped over a chair and fell sprawling, was inclined to be cross. 'I want my tea,' he said. 'Why couldn't they recognise your voice? Let's run and shove both our weights against it. It may give.'

No, the door was firm. They were prisoners. From the dying away of the streaks of sunlight that had been coming through the chinks they realised presently that they must have been an hour in the shed. They were getting ravenously hungry. The smell of a multitude of boxes, sacks, and countless odds-and-ends was overpowering. Each in turn spent most of the time lying flat on the floor, one eye to a small round hole in the door, watching to see if any one should pass by. As ill-chance would have it, no one did.

When twilight was fast approaching, the boys began to be seriously alarmed. What would Agatha and their father do? Their fright and astonishment when no tidings were brought to them were dreadful to imagine. Besides, neither of the boys fancied a whole long night spent in the shed.

'We shall be bitten by ants,' gloomily said Gerald. 'But why hasn't the idiot who locked us in done anything? If we were tramps, they couldn't keep us here for ever.'

'Shut up a minute! I believe I hear footsteps.'

They held their breath. Yes, footsteps and voices. There was a pause outside.

'Please don't worry, Miss Agatha,' the Vicar's voice said. 'I feel sure nothing serious has happened to them. Before we consider our next step, we will thoroughly question these men.'

Gerald banged on the door. 'Open the door! It's Fred and me!' he cried.

An exclamation from Agatha. The door was hastily unlocked, and, blinking, the boys came out into the twilight.

'Some one made a mistake, and suddenly banged the door on us before we had time to explain,' said Gerald. 'I don't know why they left us so long—'

The Vicar burst out laughing. 'Well, you must forgive any one for not recognising you!' he managed to say, at last. 'And as to leaving you captives so long, what with our talk about our little cripple, and then the discovery of your disappearance, we had forgotten all about Hester's fright at seeing you, and her capture, till ten minutes ago.'

'What induced you to get yourselves up like that?' asked Agatha, her face pale from the anxiety she had gone through.

'We went to get money from Mr. Germain, for Billy Thomson. Look! He can go away now.'

He held out the money on his palm. The Vicar's laugh rang out again. 'You boys are incorrigible!' he said. 'I can't think what I should do with you if you were my sons! It's really rather a splendid notion, though! I wonder if Mr. Germain will ever find out?'

ALICE JAMES.

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

The Tale of some famous Sieges.

I.—ANTWERP.

THE Cock-pit of Europe, that is the name that has been given to Belgium and Holland—the Netherlands or Lowlands of Western Europe—and it must be confessed that the grim title (a cock-pit was where cock-fights were formerly held) is well deserved. One great campaign after another has been fought to a finish in this country, for its plains are admirably suited to the movements of armies, the flat coasts afford no serious obstacle to the landing of troops, and the rich cities of Flanders and Brabant, with their stores of merchandise and wonderful artistic treasures, have always been a tempting bait to hostile neighbours. The whole country lies on the great western waterway, between the higher lands of France and Germany.

Guingate, Nieuport, Oudenarde, and Waterloo! As we look at the map of Belgium we see the names of many famous battles, and indeed the country is like a great historical war-map, in which each town and district has its own tragic and glorious story of conflict and heroism.

We all know that history repeats itself, and Belgium gives us many instances of the truth of this old saying, for the little country, standing as it does between two great nations, or races, the Teutonic and the Frankish, has continually been attacked by one or other of these powerful neighbours; and again and again England has

joined in the warfare, either to further her own interests or to help the brave Flemings in their struggle for independence.

During the Middle Ages every important city in the Low Countries was strongly fortified, and there is hardly one of the quaint old-world towns which has not, at one time or another in its history, been besieged and bombarded. Many of them have had to go through the terrible experience more than once, and Antwerp, which, before the outbreak of war in 1914, was one of the greatest ports in the world, has been besieged no less than seven times.

The first of these sieges took place in the year 1642, when the French, under Longueville, attacked the city with thirty-five thousand men. Antwerp, however, was so bravely defended by its citizens, and the foreign merchants, among whom were many English, that the enemy was forced to retire.

The sixteenth century was a terrible period in Flemish history, for the country having come into the possession of the king of Spain, its inhabitants were treated with terrible cruelty by their foreign masters. A great revolt took place, and for many years the struggle for freedom went on, England and France both helping the patriots against the Spanish. Antwerp was attacked and bombarded in 1576, in 1583, and in 1584.

The longest siege, which began in 1584 and lasted for fourteen months, was one of the most famous in history, and wonderful stories are told of the courage and ingenuity both of the Spaniards and of the native and foreign soldiers who defended the city. The besieging army was led by a great general, Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, and he had determined to take the city at all costs.

Antwerp is situated in a very strong position on the river Scheldt, and was well fortified, having, in addition to the walls and the citadel, a number of outlying forts. The inhabitants did not believe that the place could ever be captured, and although they were advised by their leader, the Prince of Orange, to cut the dykes, and thus, by flooding the country, provide an extra defence to the city, they only carried out a portion of this scheme, and felt confident that they would be able to resist attack.

The task of the besiegers was a difficult one, for even when the outer forts on both sides of the river had been captured, the river itself, which, indeed, is more a wide estuary of the sea than a river, provided a waterway by which supplies of food and reinforcements of troops could safely be taken into the beleaguered town.

For some time this was done, the Dutch captains sailing their ships up and down the river with impunity; but the Duke of Parma was not a man to allow his plans to be frustrated. He was one of the greatest generals of the age, and there were many skilful engineers in his army, so before long he declared his intention of building a bridge across the Scheldt, and thus completing the investment of the city.

As was only to be expected, the Flemings laughed at this scheme, and declared it to be an impossibility; but the Spaniards went quietly about their work, and a huge structure was actually built, which at first narrowed the channel of the river, and then closed it entirely.

The brave defenders of Antwerp now saw the possibility of starvation before them; but they did not despair, and soon proved that they were no whit behind their enemies in courage and resource. Seventeen fire-ships were prepared, and these were set adrift, and allowed to float down towards the bridge. Many of them ran aground, and blazed away harmlessly, but one reached its goal, and exploded, doing tremendous damage, and killing more than a thousand Spaniards.

Unfortunately, there were no telegraphs or telephones in those days to flash news of disaster or victory from place to place, and, although the noise of the explosion was heard in Antwerp, the real truth was not known for some days; and the success, therefore, was not followed up. This gave the enemy time to repair the bridge, and the city was held by them as firmly as ever.

The Flemish now determined to cut the Kowensteyn Dyke, and by flooding the country enable the supply ships to reach them once more. The attempt was made, and regiments of English and Scotch soldiers, who were in Antwerp, helped the patriots in their attack on the great embankment, which was strongly held by the enemy. A battle followed, in which both sides fought with wonderful bravery, and the British troops especially distinguished themselves. The Duke of Parma himself led the Spaniards, and at one point in the fight he seized a pike from a soldier and leapt into the water, in order to encourage his men to advance, 'when,' as an old writer says, 'he saw that they would no more go to the charge, seeing that the English and Scotch were doing their duty so well.'

The battle lasted for hours, and the dyke was cut in several places, but in the end the Spaniards were victorious, and the Flemings, with their brave allies, were driven back into the city.

Later on, a huge ship, or floating fortress, was built and sent against the bridge; but this venture also proved a failure, and in the end the city was obliged to surrender.

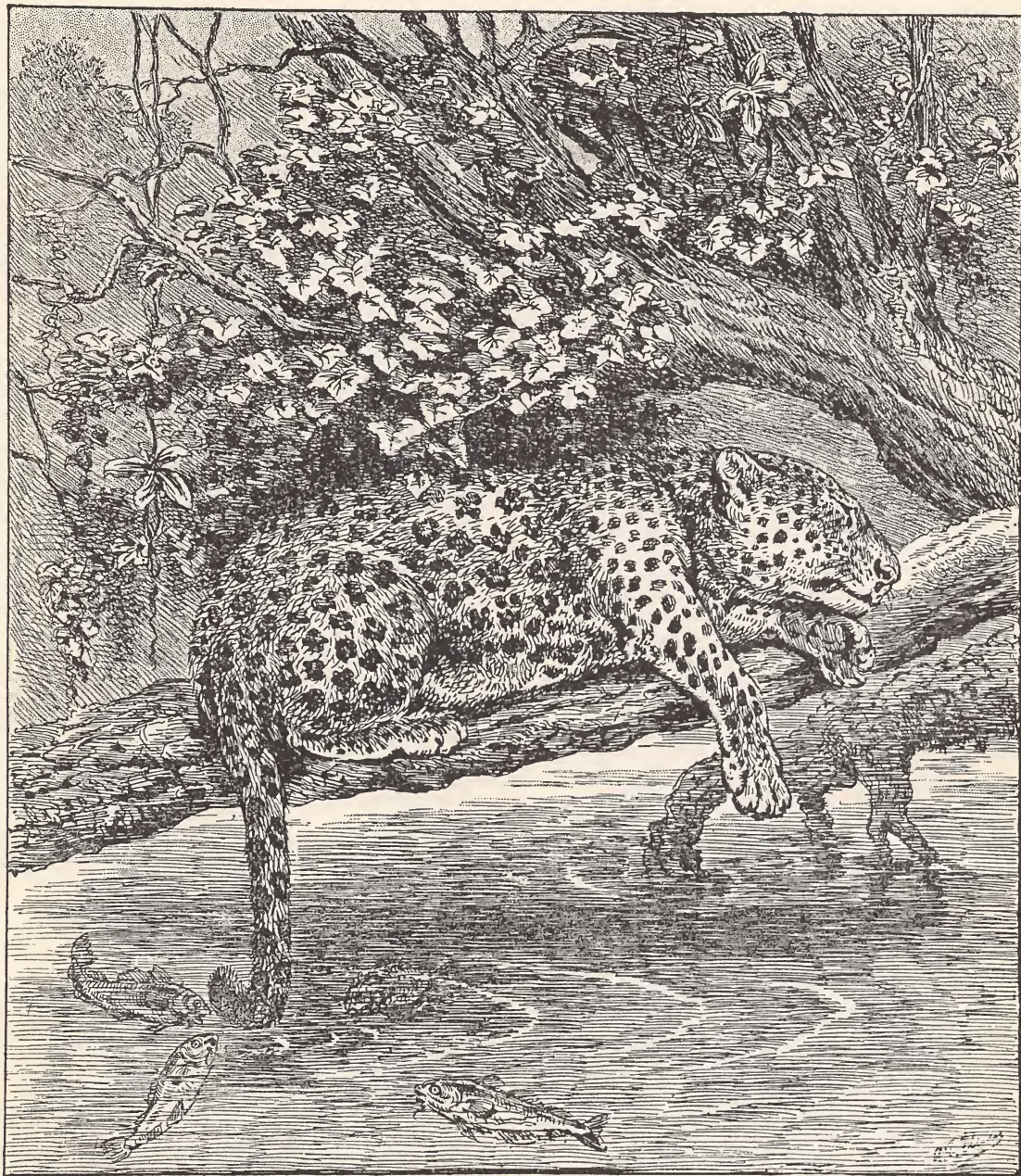
During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Antwerp passed into the possession of one country after another, and it was occupied for some time by Napoleon, who called the city a 'pistol held at the heart of England,' and considered it a position of great importance, because it could be used as a safe naval base against our island.

In 1832, when Belgium separated itself from Holland, Antwerp was bombarded again, but this time from its own citadel, which was held by the Dutch, under General Chassé, against an attacking army of Belgians and French.

Holland gave up the city, although it retained the mouth of the Scheldt; and then for more than seventy years there was peace. The citizens must have thought that their days of warfare were at an end, but in the summer of 1914 Germany set Europe ablaze, and, once more, as so often in the past, Belgium had to bear the brunt of the attack.

Events followed each other quickly in those autumn days, and at last Antwerp, now the seat of the Belgian Government and the brave King and Queen, found the invading army at its gates.

There was no long siege this time, for the fortifications, which had been considered almost impregnable, proved powerless against modern artillery, and after several terrible days of bombardment, Antwerp was



THE UNWILLING FISHERMAN.

A Story without Words.

forced to surrender. The gallant Belgian army, together with the English forces which had come to their aid, marched out of the city and retreated either to friendly Holland, or to the narrow strip of land in the west which still remained as independent Belgian territory.

REBELS—AND A RABBIT.

‘ALLAN, what *shall* we do? Evelyn isn’t coming to lessons again to-day!’

Chris’s face was a study in blank consternation as she shut the schoolroom door behind her, and she



“‘It’s all right. I’m not hurt.’”

almost stamped with impatience as Allan slowly raised his head from the book before him and looked up with an air of lazy indifference. ‘What—is she ill?’ he asked. ‘Then we must wait till to-morrow, I suppose,’

‘But we *can’t*,’ said Chris, leaning across the table and shaking her tangled mane of red curls from her face. ‘I can’t keep the rabbit a day longer. It has got loose twice this morning already, and the second

time it was actually under Miss Welman’s bed, nibbling her bedroom slippers—’

‘It must have been jolly hungry,’ put in Allan, with a grin.

It wasn’t. It had just eaten those lettuces you bagged from the garden last night. If Tomlin finds out that we took them, there *will* be a row!’

Allan rose from the table and walked slowly across

to the window. 'Well, tell Miss Welman you want to see Evelyn. She couldn't mind——'

'But I *have* told her, and she has forbidden me to go to the house at all. She won't say why.'

'Unreasonable old wretch,' observed Allan.

'There's no way of sending the rabbit,' continued Chris. 'I must take it myself, and it must go to-day, but how on earth it's going to be done I don't know.'

Allan made a slight movement at the window, and Chris, exasperated, saw him suddenly lean out and crane his neck over the iron bars. Then he gradually withdrew his head, and turned an excited face towards his sister. 'People going to look over the Hobsons' house!' he exclaimed.

Chris turned away sharply with a gesture of impatience. 'Oh, well, if you aren't going to try to help——', she began.

'But I *am* helping. Don't you see? I have thought of a splendid idea—a way to take the rabbit to Evelyn without any one finding out that we have seen her!'

For a moment Chris looked suspiciously towards her brother, then, convinced by the eager excitement in his face, she leaned forward and listened with breathless attention.

'Evelyn's father wants to sell their house, and people go and look over it every day, like those people at the Hobsons'. Why shouldn't we dress up in Mother's clothes, and take the rabbit with us in a box? We should go into Evelyn's room——'

'And we could give it to her when no one was looking!' put in Chris, excitedly. 'Oh, Allan, what a splendid idea! And Miss Welman and Mother are both going out this afternoon, so it's all absolutely perfect.'

'No one will spot us,' added Allan. 'I will get hold of that motor-bonnet and long skirt that I wore when we dressed up on Christmas Day. Even Nurse didn't know me!'

'No,' returned Chris, in rather a doubtful voice. Then she jumped to her feet. 'Here's Miss Welman, and I haven't cleaned the blackboard!' she exclaimed. 'Throw over the duster, and get out the French books, Allan!'

Fortunately for the children's plan, their mother and Miss Welman started out early in the afternoon, and in less than an hour after the door had shut behind them, two odd little figures, shrouded in veils, and trailing draggled lengths of skirts, crept mysteriously out of the gates, and began hurrying along the road.

They were both rather flushed and breathless when they reached the top of the high flight of steps leading up to the Willoughby's hall-door, and Chris felt a sudden qualm of fear as a tall, severe-looking maid appeared in answer to their ring.

'Have you an order to view?' she asked stiffly, in reply to the little girl's tremulous query.

There was a moment's awful pause, as the children exchanged glances of dismay, then Chris's wits came hurriedly to the rescue. 'We saw the board outside,' she said in as haughty a voice as she could summon. 'I see there are nine bedrooms. We should like to see them first.'

There was the sound of a suppressed giggle from Allan, as he followed his sister up the broad flight of stairs, but it was promptly quelled by a violent nudge from Chris, who pointed feverishly at the maid, and then at the handbag that contained the rabbit.

'You go with her, and I will bolt into Evelyn's room,' she whispered.

Allan obeyed, following the tall figure along a passage, as Chris disappeared through a door at the top of the stairs.

The minutes went by, and there was no signs of her reappearing, as in feverish impatience Allan went from room to room, examining each exhaustively, and asking innumerable questions in the attempt to spin out the time, and cover his sister's absence. He was inquiring whether the house faced north or south for the fifth time when the sound of scampering footsteps, followed by a scream and a loud banging thud, made even the frigid maid run forward in alarm. Forgetting all about the disguise, Allan picked up his skirts and raced to the landing, and as he did so he heard the front door open, and Mrs. Willoughby walked hastily into the hall. Hardly seeing her, Allan raced blindly down the staircase, and as he reached a wriggling black heap at the bottom Chris extricated her head, and looked round in bewilderment.

'The rabbit!' she whispered, hastily, as she saw Allan bending over her. 'It's all right. I'm not hurt. It got loose in Evelyn's room, and I tried to catch it, and then I fell over my skirt. Where *has* it gone to?'

A few minutes later she was lying on the drawing-room sofa, trying to explain to Mrs. Willoughby's perplexed ears all the events that had led up to this unfortunate ending.

'You won't be cross with Evelyn about the rabbit, will you?' she pleaded, in conclusion. 'Owen gave it to her, and she didn't want you to know till she had got a hutch for it, so I have been keeping it until today.'

Mrs. Willoughby promised, with a smile, but there was an anxious look in her eyes as she leaned forward, and laid her hand on Chris's brown one. 'Chris, did you go into Evelyn's room?' she asked.

Chris nodded.

'She is very poorly,' Mrs. Willoughby continued. 'The doctor thinks she may be going to have chickenpox, so I told your mother that you were on no account to come near her.'

The blood rushed to Chris's face, and for some moments she had a hard struggle to keep back the tears. In seven days it would be holidays—the time in which she and Allan had planned to do so much; and she had not forgotten the Easter long ago when they had both been kept in bed with measles.

It was not until the following day that the children heard that they were safe, as Evelyn's illness proved to be only a feverish chill, and the time of anxiety taught them a lesson.

'I'll never disobey Miss Welman again,' Chris remarked, penitently, when the first outburst of joy had calmed down. 'She has been a brick not to punish us as we really deserve.'

Allan agreed with an emphatic nod. 'Jolly sporting of her,' he said; 'and do you know she told me that she found the rabbit in the spare room wardrobe, when you left it yesterday, sitting on her best hat. Any one else would have kicked up a fearful row, but she didn't tell any one, which was ripping of her.'

Chris's face was turned to the window, and there was a look of remorse in the blue eyes, as she stared thoughtfully into the garden beyond.

'FOLLOWERS ALLOWED.'

THEY say that Friendship's hollow through,
And Love is hollower;
But I have *one* sincere and true
Devoted follower!

The neighbours see us 'walking out'
Together daily;
They think no harm, but turn about
To greet us gaily.

And 'he is handsome as a dream,'
Is oft repeated,
But spite of all he does not seem
One bit conceited.

He watches me all through the walk,
His dark eyes glisten;
He seldom speaks—but when I talk
He loves to listen.

Yet if a rival tries to steal
A friendly greeting,
His jealous language then, I feel,
Won't bear repeating!

He likes to feel my fingers rest
Upon his shoulder,
He walks along with prouder crest,
Erefter, bolder.

I hope you do not think *me* bold
With all this folly?
For I am only twelve years old,
And *he's* my—collie! EDITH HARRISON.

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINCY.

(Continued from page 15.)

THE day was far advanced when they reached the bare summit of the sandstone hills, and gazed at an almost boundless panorama. They sat in a small sandy hollow with their backs to the crown of the hill, munching their sandwiches and drinking tepid lemonade. The sun—a blazing ball—was sinking toward the west. They looked down on the Citadel, and below that Cairo was spread like a map; beyond, stretching to the horizon, lay the vast sandy desert—treeless, unbroken, except where on the sky-line the diminished Pyramids showed. The eye returned to the delicate minarets of Cairo and the broad waters of the Nile. Here were clusters of palms—a line of palms—other trees in the public gardens. The port was pencilled with slender masts and the sweeping yards of dahabeeyahs. The funnels and upper decks of the steamers made blots on the sheen of the water. Two or three barges were moored in the stream. A blur of smoke far away up the river showed where a steamer of larger size was coming—now passing the tiny villages on the bank—coming from Wady Halfa. Another steamer was getting under way—just starting up the river—as they would be starting on Wednesday—to Thebes, Karnak, Luxor, Assuan, Wadi Halfa—places which were only names to them now, but where they soon would be—meeting who knows what adventures.

CHAPTER II.

THERE sat the boys in the shallow, sandy hollow with their backs to the bank which formed the crown of the hill. Dick's legs were outstretched before him, his hands clasped at the back of his head, his eyes placidly gazing into the distance. Harry lay full-length beside him, and Selim was bending over the basket—packing the remains of their repast. Suddenly the stillness was broken by sounds of panting and the scurrying of feet. A guttural exclamation from above. Then the figure of a man—stumbling—clutching—fell over the heads of the two English boys, and, knocking Selim flat on his face, rolled at the feet of Dick. It was a man, bearded, of swarthy complexion, whose turban had rolled off, showing his shaven head. He was gasping for breath, the muscles of his neck twitching, his brow contracted with pain, his eyes dim and bloodshot. He had a wound in his leg, and blood was dabbled over his white skirts. He raised himself on his elbow and motioned to his lips as though parched with thirst.

'Water! quick!' cried Dick. 'Here, give us that cold tea.' He held it to the lips of the man who clutched the bottle convulsively and did not let go till it was empty. Then, struggling to get to his feet, the man fell back with a grunt and clasped his wounded leg. The fall over the bank had been the last straw: he was completely exhausted.

The boys looked at one another in perplexity.

'He one of the Soudanese prisoners,' said Selim in a hollow voice.

'Escaped!' added Harry in the same tone.

'What's to be done?' exclaimed Dick. 'At any rate we can bind up that wound. Here, Selim, you run up to the top and tell us if any one's coming. I expect they're after him—poor beggar.'

In a twinkling Harry had torn his handkerchief into strips, and Dick bound up the wounded leg in a tolerably workmanlike manner, finishing off with a long strip torn from the man's skirt.

The dervish looked grateful, but kept muttering in a language unknown to Dick, and now, with a nervous jerk of his arm, pointed over the hill.

'Here, Selim, come down a minute!' cried Dick. 'I don't know what he's saying, whether it's Arabic, or what it is. See if you can make out.'

'That not Arabic,' said Selim, with a shake of the head; then exclaimed, his face brightening, 'Ah! now he got it. He say, soldiers shoot his leg, soldiers come after him. If him hide till sundown, him get away all right.'

'What's to be done, Harry?' Dick thrust his hands deep into his trousers pockets, turned on his cousin and frowned heavily.

'What's to be done? You see, he's an enemy, and we ought not to help him to escape; ought we?'

'I don't know,' replied Harry. 'He's an enemy and we oughtn't to help him to escape.'

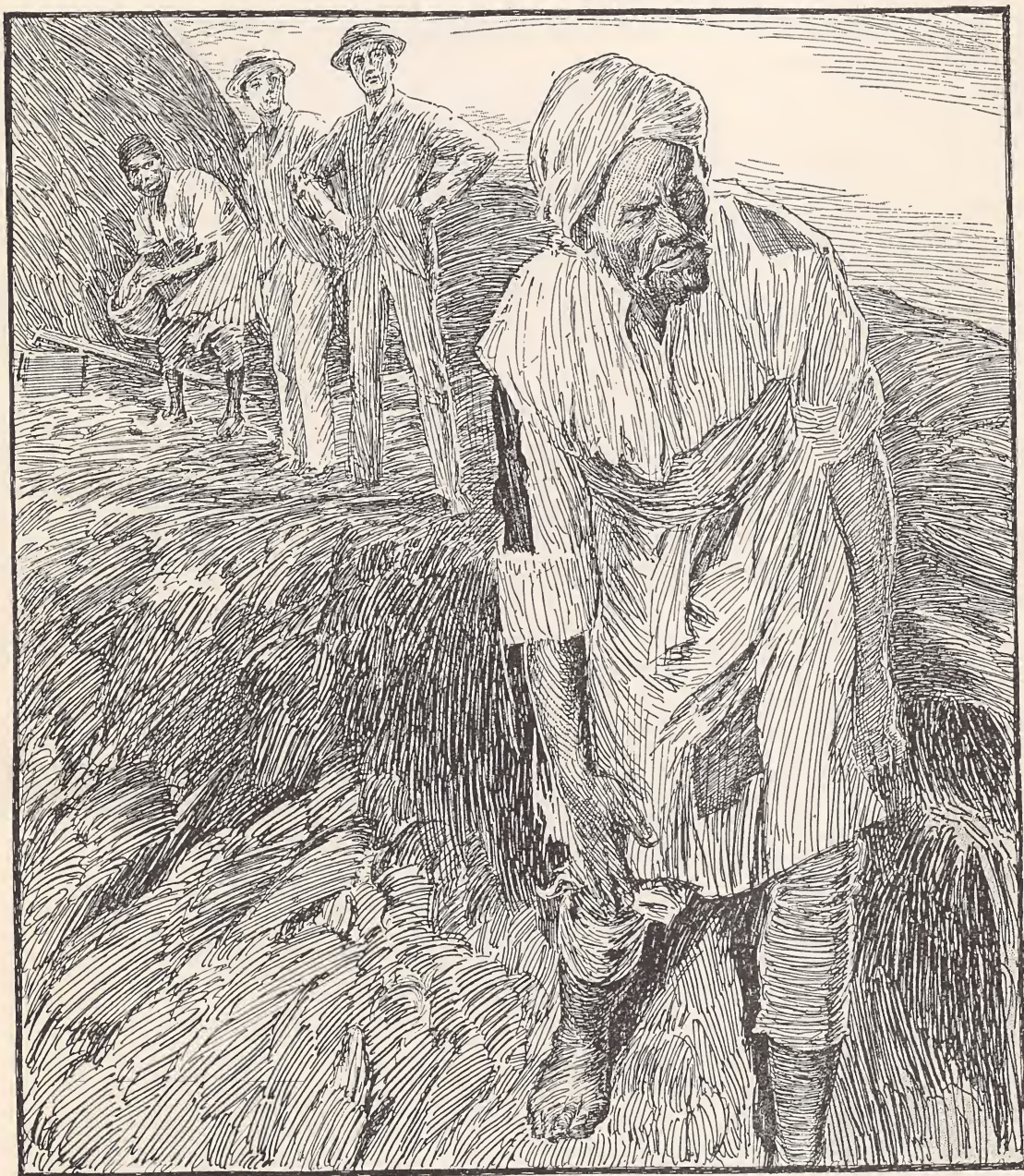
'That's what I just said,' retorted Dick. 'It's no good talking like a parrot. What do you say yourself?'

Here Selim slid down the bank, exclaiming breathlessly, 'Soldiers coming—two up this hill, double quick—two more further along, and man on horse at the bottom!'

(Continued on page 26.)



“The figure of a man fell over the heads of the boys.”



"The Dervish limped down the hill-side into the darkness."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 23.)

'WELL, what do you say?' repeated Dick, hotly, as he faced round on Harry.

The two boys were rapidly losing their temper over the dilemma in which they were placed.

'What I say is,' Harry burst out fiercely, stiffening his arms by his side and clenching his fists, 'give the poor beggar a chance. That's what I say. 'Tisn't as if he were a criminal. He's a prisoner of war. Give the poor beggar a chance!'

'That's about it,' cried Dick, dancing round with excitement, and, quite forgetful of his criticism of Harry for talking like a parrot, he kept repeating, 'Give the poor beggar a chance.'

'How far are they off now?' he shouted to Selim, who again stood sentinel on top of the bank.

'They come quick—three, four minutes they come!'

'Then sharp's the word. Tell the dervish we'll bury him in the sand and sit on him,' and Dick fell to work on the loose earth, with both hands, to make a trench.

In two minutes the body of the dervish was covered with sand, not without care for the injured leg; his face only being left, being hidden by the inverted luncheon basket, through which he could breathe freely, over this, as a further screen, straddled the tripod of Harry's camera and the black focusing-cloth. In three minutes the boys were seated, more or less comfortably to all parties, on the chest of the escaped prisoner, with their backs against the bank; and in four minutes the fez of an Egyptian soldier appeared over the crest of the bank. And when, with a muttered exclamation, which was not in the Koran, he slipped, banging his knee with his rifle, narrowly escaping the same mode of descent that the Soudanese had made before him, he found a lazy English tourist boy with legs outstretched and hands clasped behind his head, his back propped against the bank, looking dreamily at the sunset; a listless photographer, removing a plate from his camera; and a coloured boy munching a biscuit, and draining the last drops from a bottle of cold tea.

The soldier, whose temper was not of the sweetest, possibly from failing to relish the duty of charging uphill in pursuit of an invisible foe, slid down the bank into the hollow below, emitting a stream of Arabic broken by gasps for breath. The English tourist boy turned a gently puzzled countenance toward him, and pointing his fore-finger to his chest, said apologetically, 'English; we don't understand Arabic,' then pointing to the coloured boy, 'He understands Arabic.'

The soldier turned on Selim with another discharge of eloquence. Then Selim was great. He rose in his might. He talked that soldier down. He pointed to the East, he pointed to the West, to the North, and to the South: his guileless genius rising to higher and yet higher flights till the soldier, who had by this time been joined by a comrade, seemed completely bewildered. With a salaam to the young English Pasha, as Selim's flights had suggested Dick's rank to be in his own country, he grumbling went his way.

The boys sat there in silence, after considerably slipping from the chest of the buried man. They dared

not look at Selim for fear of an explosion, but there was no need to be in fear of that resourceful youth. His usually grinning face was turned soberly to the sky, his eyes gazing at the stars that were beginning to appear with an expression of poetic ecstasy.

'It bad for poor soldiers not find missing prisoner,' he sighed. 'We, too, late home for dinner—very much. I look round—see if all right.' He rose, and sauntered round the hill-top, and looked into the shadows. The lights in Cairo were now faintly twinkling. Selim returned, the tripod and basket were removed, and the prisoner managed to rise to his feet. His turban, which the boys had picked up and hidden in that rapid three minutes, when the stage was cleared for the tableau, was restored to him.

'I say, Dick,' whispered Harry, 'the poor fellow will starve before he gets back to his own place. Have you any money about you? I've only got a few piastres: he can have those.'

'Give me what you've got,' said Dick, diving first into one pocket, then into the other, for his own contribution.

The dervish was feeling his wounded leg, and looking round to take his bearings, his eye fell on the city lights and the glistening water, and he seemed satisfied. Dick approached him, and placed the coins in his hand. The dervish drew himself up very erect, looked up to the sky above, then slid something smooth and round into Dick's palm, closing his fingers on it. He salaamed deeply to Dick and then to Harry, and with a few words uttered in solemn tones limped down the hillside into the darkness.

'What did he say?' inquired Dick of Selim, as they gathered up their traps and prepared to descend the hill homeward.

'He say,' replied Selim, "'It is a debt. I will repay. Omar of Berber never forgets.'"

The boys returned to the city very soberly. The adventure had made a great impression on them. It was late when they arrived at the hotel, and Uncle Charlie was pacing up and down the verandah, looking rather worried.

(Continued on page 38.)

'A RELIC OF THE PAST.'

IT hangs upon my study wall,
A little sketch—'tis roughly drawn;
And yet I like it best of all,
Although in places it is torn.

You see, the thing was done in school—
We raised a pile of books before:
We didn't work much as a rule,
When we were both in Lower IV.

Two figures there—ourselves, I ween—
Are drawn: the likeness isn't strong,
For Smith and I were then fifteen,
And most of what we did was wrong.

Two football caps hang on the wall—
We hadn't won our colours then:
To us it represented all
That raised us both from boys to men.

Beneath is written, 'When we two
Are masters, 1898,
Why, then there'll be no work to do!'
Alas! we little knew our fate!

We both of us are masters now,
And when we meet again once more,
We talk of times gone by, and how
We lived in those good days of yore.

Poetic justice now decrees
That boys in turn *our* lessons shirk,
And what we thought a life of ease,
We find to be a life of work.

The same excuses which we made
For uncompleted work, are brought
To us. On us in turn are played
The very tricks we could have taught.

Time passes. We shall never see
Our youth again. Our hopes are killed.
That sketch, however, seems to me
A prophecy in part fulfilled.

AT SEA.

'I SAY, mayn't you come?'

The boy on the wall shook his head, looking down at the expectant little party below. 'I'm awfully sorry,' he said; 'I asked, of course, but it's no use.'

'Why don't you take French leave?' suggested the boy in the road; but Godfrey shook his head.

'Are you afraid?'

'No, it's not that. I don't suppose my grandfather would say much to me if I did, only—it seems mean, don't you think?'

His friend flushed a little; he had taken French leave often enough himself, and that view had never struck him before. 'I suppose it is,' he answered. 'Well, if you can't you can't, but it's a pity. It's a glorious day, and will be beautifully cool down in the cave.'

'I know; I should simply love to come; it's deadly dull here. Good-bye.'

He sat on the wall watching until a bend in the road hid them from sight, then he dropped back on to the soft turf of the park and walked slowly towards the house. It was very hot and sultry under the great trees, and so still; hardly a leaf rustled this burning afternoon. Godfrey thought longingly of the beach, where there was always a breeze, and gay companions. Almost involuntarily he turned towards the river; at least he could lie in the boat.

Why wouldn't his grandfather let him play with the O'Brians? If, because he was one day to be master of these big estates, he was never to have any fun, he would rather have been born poor. He flung himself into the boat, never noticing that it was unmoored, and, making himself comfortable on the cushions there, lay gazing dreamily into the bower of green above him, until the summer afternoon worked its spell and he fell asleep.

Not for long, however. The thunder, which had been threatening all day, worked up during the afternoon, and Godfrey was awakened by a crashing peal. He sat up and stared about him in perplexity. The boat was pitching and tossing uncomfortably, and the riverbanks on either side had disappeared, leaving a stretch of tumbling waters.

The boy speedily grasped what had happened: for some reason or other the gates, which his grandfather had put across the river, had been left open and the boat had drifted through and out to sea, while he slept. What was to be done? He took up the oars and tried to row, but the tide set outwards, and his strength was as nothing against the current.

Another terrific peal of thunder seemed to open the clouds, and down came the rain in torrents—a rushing, driving rain that slapped the surface of the sea with tremendous force.

Godfrey crouched in the bottom of the boat, wet through and thoroughly scared. However should he get out of this pickle?

It was useless shouting, he knew; there was not another boat to be seen, and the rocks, towards which he was drifting, were not likely to afford him any help. The wash of the current took him right round the point of the rocks, where the waves were dashing up fiercely. He murmured a prayer. But every moment he expected to be swamped.

Suddenly a call rang out: 'Hullo! boat ahoy!'

A peal of thunder drowned his answering call, but he waited till it passed and called again.

He was almost at the foot of the rocks now, washing backwards and forwards in the trough of the waves; fortunately there was not much sea on, or he would certainly have been drowned. As he clung desperately to the side, a rope with a loop in it came hurtling from above.

'Slip the rope round your waist and hold tight, and we will pull you up!' yelled a voice, and Godfrey lost no time in obeying.

A moment more and he was swinging in air, far above the angry wave, which snatched the boat and dashed it to pieces against the rocks.

Up, up he went, until a hand stretched down from the ledge and caught his, and he was safe in the cave with the O'Brians.

The children were dancing round in high glee. 'A real rescue!' they cried; but Paul, the eldest, with a look at Godfrey's white face and chattering teeth, hurried him inside.

'Jess, make something hot—mind, boiling hot!—on the stove at once, and I will get you out of those wet things instanter, old chap!'

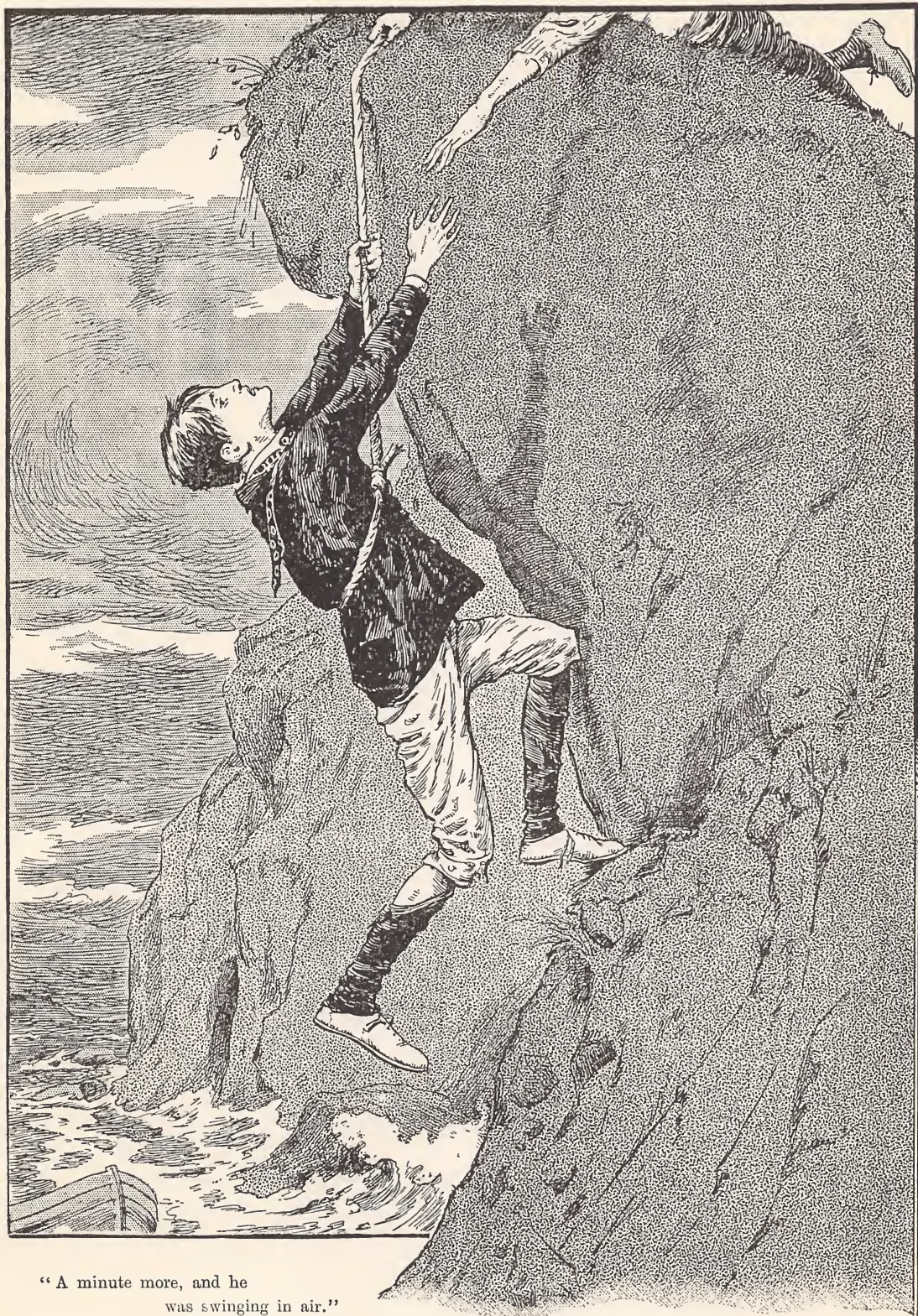
He was as good as his word. He made Godfrey undress, and rubbed him down with a rough towel till he glowed all over; then he dosed him with hot milk till he scalded his throat and the poor victim begged for mercy.

Then, the storm being over, the sun came out, and they all had tea, while Godfrey's clothes dried, and went home at last across the wet sands, when the tide released them, none the worse.

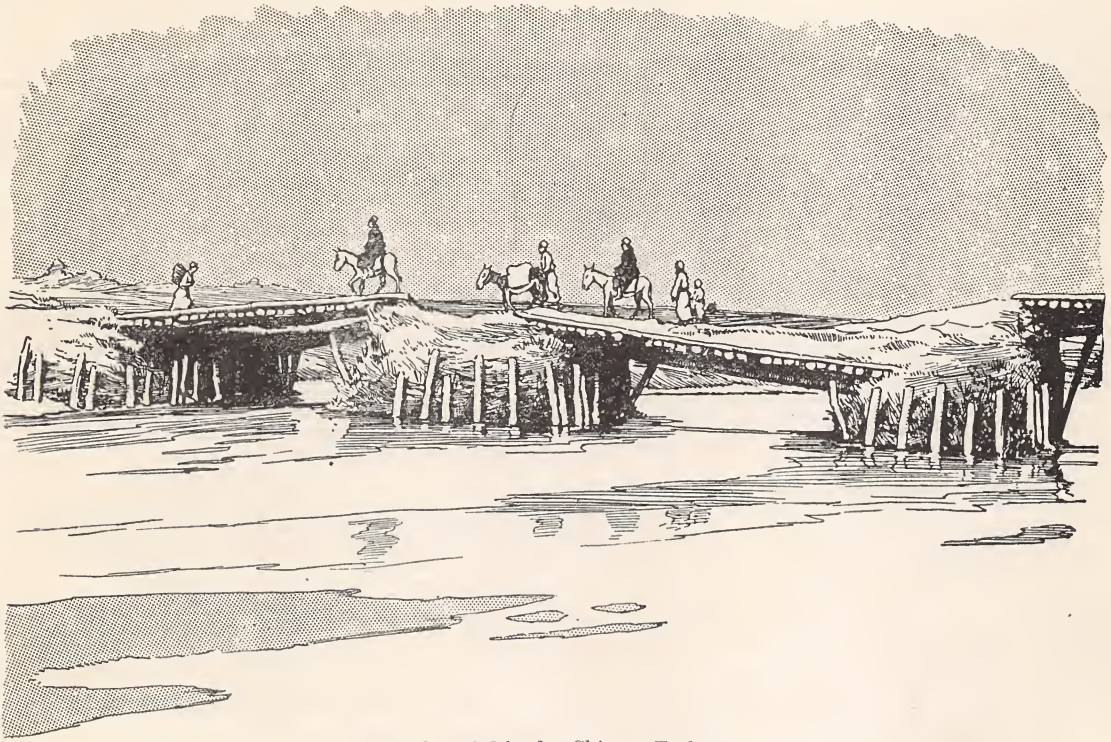
And when Godfrey's grandfather heard the story that evening, he merely said, 'Humph! you seem safer with those O'Brians than by yourself!'

And that's how Godfrey got the permission he wanted.

MAY HEWARD.



“A minute more, and he
was swinging in air.”



A Bridge of Islands, Chinese Turkestan.

ACROSS THE WATER.

The Story of Bridges.

I.—IN OLDEN DAYS.

IN very ancient times there were no bridges at all, and when people wanted to cross rivers they were obliged either to swim or take a boat, or else to make their way along the course of the stream until they came to some place where the water was shallow enough for them to wade through.

These shallow places were called fords, and some of the smaller ones are still to be found in England where a stream runs across an old road, or, to be more correct, where a road goes through a stream—for the stream is older than the road as a rule.

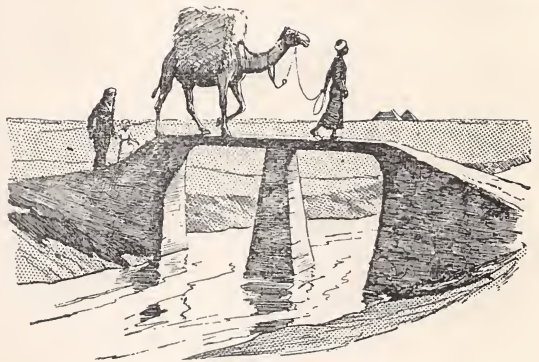
Many Saxon names of towns, such as Dartford, Chelmsford, and Hereford, serve to remind us of these old primitive days.

As time went on, other means were found by which streams might be crossed. Horses, vehicles, and cattle still used the fords, but the foot-travellers, who now were more civilised, and wore shoes and stockings, preferred to go dry-shod. They chose places, therefore, where there were rocks in the stream, and, when these were not forthcoming, artificial boulders—or stepping-stones—were arranged. Sometimes, when there were no large stones available, or when the water was too deep for their use, a tree-trunk was thrown from bank to bank, or smaller logs were stretched from one

stepping-stone to another, and thus bridges were evolved.

In some parts of the world, bridges which carry out this last idea on a large scale are still to be seen; the illustration of a quaint structure in Chinese Turkestan is a good example. Here we see little islands taking the place of stepping-stones, with rough wooden bridges stretching from one island to another.

But although bridges of a primitive nature were invented in quite early times, fords still remained in



An Egyptian Bridge.

use, and even now there are many of them in the wild districts of India and South Africa. In the latter country the width and depth of a river often changes very quickly, according to the amount of rain that falls in the mountains where it rises; and a stream which in the morning is a mere trickle of water may by night-fall be a broad and raging torrent. Terrible accidents have sometimes happened thus at the South African fords, or drifts, as they are called, and waggons with their oxen and drivers have been swept away.

The other ancient way of crossing rivers by boat also still remains, although in many cases the ferries have now been superseded by bridges; and in a few places in the East, men still paddle across rivers on blown-out skin bags, like bladders, just as they did thousands of years ago.

In old times there were two very famous ferries across the Thames in London, and interesting stories are told about them both.

The most important of the ferries was the one situated at the point where the great Roman road, called Watling Street, stretched north and south from either side of the river. Here, we are told by old historians, long before the Norman conquest, Mary, a pious maid, built a fair church, and founded a convent. The church was named St. Mary over the Rie, that is 'over the water,' and although the original church has been rebuilt, the old title remains, St. Mary Overy.

The other famous ferry across the Thames was at Westminster, or, as it was called in Saxon times, Thorney. Here King Sebert founded an abbey and dedicated it to St. Peter, and in order to save the bishop the trouble of consecrating the building, St. Peter himself, according to the old legend, descended from heaven with a company of angels. Unfortunately he arrived on the Surrey side of the river in the middle of a dark and stormy night. He was ferried across the stream by a poor fisherman named Edric, who also conveyed him back again when the ceremony was at an end. For this service Edric was rewarded with a marvellous catch of salmon, and he was told, moreover, that he and his descendants would never want for these fish as long as they gave the tenth part of each draught to the Church. Up to the year 1382 there was a strange ceremony observed at Westminster, when the fish was presented each year.

The earliest bridges were always made with stone piles and a wooden superstructure, and, in Europe, it was not until the time of the Romans that bridges built entirely of stone were introduced.

A wonderful stone bridge was made by the Emperor Trajan over the Danube, in the year 105 A.D. It measured no less than four thousand seven hundred and seventy feet in length.

There are stone bridges of this period still existing, in part, in England, for the Romans were great builders, and left traces of their handiwork in all the countries that they conquered. The Roman bridge across the Thames at Staines is one of the oldest and best preserved in England.

In many lands quaint and primitive bridges are still to be seen, and the picture of a camel crossing a roughly-built archway in Egypt is very curious. The ancient Egyptians, although they built huge temples, and were, perhaps, the finest engineers and architects that the world has ever seen, did not attempt to bridge the great river that runs through their country, and in this

picture we see a little modern bridge of the most simple and primitive construction, while in the distance are the wonderful pyramids that were built more than six thousand years ago.

The old Egyptians had no means of crossing the Nile except by boat, and in the wall-pictures which decorate their tombs and temples we see paintings of the little vessels that were used, and which, with their high curved bows and broad lateen sails, are almost exactly like the graceful feluccas that sail up and down the river to-day.

A FAMOUS PRINTER.

IT was Aldus Manutius, of Venice, who, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, first used those *sloping* Roman letters which we call 'italics.' The books printed by him, called 'Aldine' editions, are much sought after by collectors. Aldus was the most famous printer of Italy, if not of the world. His first volume in the new type was a Vergil, published in 1501. As the price of this book was only about two shillings of our money, Aldus may be justly considered one of the pioneers of cheap literature.

Should you ever come across an old book on which is printed a dolphin twined about an anchor, with the name 'Aldus,' be sure you do not light the fire with it, or throw it away! For that dolphin is the Aldine 'mark,' and the books which have it are often of great value.

THE MERCHANT'S ARMCHAIR.

AFTER Columbus discovered America, the world's commerce took a fresh start. Sailing ships brought goods from India and the New World, and the demand for these increased every year. Then came the 'Thirty Years' War,' which ruined trade, and made many a rich man of business poor.

A certain wealthy Dutch firm managed to continue business longer than others. But one New Year's Day when the books had been examined and the accounts made up, the head of the firm told his confidential clerk, Jansen, that things were in a bad way.

The clerk knew it, but he had already thought of a plan whereby he hoped to save the business.

'Lend me your sailing vessel for a year,' he said. 'Give me as much money and goods as you can spare, and I myself will be off to the New World. I have been there before now, and know what I am about. If God will, all may yet be well.'

The merchant agreed, and four weeks later the clerk started from the docks. Many friends came to see him off on his adventurous voyage. Some shook their heads.

'Gentlemen,' said Jansen, 'fear nothing. I firmly believe that I shall be successful, and that we shall meet again.'

Nine months had gone by, and there was no news of Jansen. Daily the merchant's face grew sadder, and at the end of the next year he found that he had lost all. With a heavy heart, he declared himself bankrupt. Everybody was sorry for him. The creditors said that they would give him six months' grace. 'Perhaps by the end of that time,' they said, 'Jansen will be back.'

But eight months passed, and still Jansen gave no sign. At last it was decided that all the property remaining to the merchant should be sold by auction.

On the day of the sale, the poor man sat at the window of a back room, where he could hear the voice of the auctioneer. His wife sat by his side, crying. The two little boys were playing with their dog.

Presently the auctioneer's man entered the room. 'Sir,' he said, 'I have been sent to fetch the armchair.'

Tears rose to the merchant's eyes. Ever since his father had passed away in that armchair, it had been held sacred in the house. Now it had to go, and the merchant and his family, including the dog, followed it to the room in which the auction was going on.

'A good, strong armchair, covered with green leather,' said the auctioneer.

Somebody offered five shillings for it.

'Five shillings, the auctioneer repeated.

'Not five shillings, but fifty pounds!'

The strong, deep voice came through an open window. Every one turned to look, and the dog, with a joyous bark, rushed through the crowd and into the street. The next moment, a man dressed as a sailor stepped into the room, and, striking the table with his Spanish cane, shouted again, 'Fifty pounds!'

'It is Jansen!' cried out the merchant.

'Yes, it is I,' said Jansen, 'and our ship is in the dock, full of gold and other things. This auction must be stopped. To-morrow our creditors shall be paid in full, with interest. Kindly leave us now, gentlemen, and let my good master and his lady welcome their old Jansen, who is very glad to be at home again.'

TEDDY, V.C.

An Indian Tale.

ALTHOUGH it was quite early in the morning, the sun was beating hotly down upon the plain where the soldiers were parading.

Little Charlie had ridden out to watch them; as they marched past him he stood up in his stirrups and cheered the men, his shrill piping voice rising above the tramp of feet. His father, riding at the head of his regiment, turned and gravely saluted his little son.

Then Charlie, sitting very erect in the saddle, cantered across the maidan towards the bazaar. His *syce* ran ahead of him, making a way for his pony through the crowd of natives and bullock-bandies and carts, which were going to the market-place at the end of the street. Suddenly there arose a great clamour: men and boys, shouting and yelling, ran past him to where a crowd had gathered. At first Charlie could not make out what all the noise was about; then, as he came nearer, he saw that a wretched little dog was being done to death by the natives.

He pushed his pony forward, his eyes flashing with anger, his hunting-crop held tightly in his hand. Dismounting, he threw the reins to the *syce*, and forced his way to where the dog lay panting upon the ground. With his feet planted wide apart he used his whip to right and left, and the natives fell back startled by the sudden onslaught; but, seeing it was only a little boy, and not one of the 'burra Sahibs,' they drew together again.

'Go away!' cried Charlie, furiously. 'Go away, you bad, bad men!'

But they only laughed and jeered at him, and tried to get hold of the dog, which had crept to Charlie's feet.

'Chelow—go, or I will tell the Colonel Sahib, and he will bring his Sepoys!'

'Hark at the boy!' scoffed a big native. 'Why don't you do as he bids?'

He made a grab at the dog, but Charlie beat him off, and the crowd began to look threatening. He stooped and picked the little beast up.

'You shan't have him! Ah, there are the Sepoys coming!'

Sure enough the sound of the steady tramp of marching soldiers was heard. A few minutes afterwards the natives had disappeared, leaving the little boy standing alone, triumphant.

The Colonel had just come in from a hard morning's work, and had thrown himself down in a long chair to rest, when he heard himself called. Putting down the paper he was reading, he saw Charlie staggering up the drive with a dirty mongrel puppy clasped tightly in his arms.

'May I keep him, Father?' he asked anxiously, as he laid the little beast down on the verandah, with a sigh of relief, for his burden had been very heavy, and the walk from the bazaar had seemed to stretch to twice its usual length.

'No, certainly not,' said the Colonel, viewing the pariah* at his feet with great disfavour.

Charlie's face quivered, and Mother, coming out on to the verandah just then, saw the distress on her little son's face. 'Where did you get him from, dear?' she asked, stooping to stroke the puppy. A pink tongue came out, and licked the kind hand.

Then Charlie told them what had happened, and how he had been able to save the poor animal from the natives.

'He is a terrible mongrel,' the Colonel said, when Charlie had finished. 'What do you say to keeping him, Mother?'

If dog's eyes ever spoke the puppy's did then, as he looked up into Mrs. Rawlins' face; and somehow she had not the heart to banish him. But what her husband had said was true—the dog was a fearful mongrel! He had a long nose and a long tail, and very, very long legs, and small watery eyes, with a black patch over one; but he looked such a forlorn, wretched little doggie that Mother's kind heart relented. She glanced up at the Colonel with a smile: 'I think we will let Charlie keep him, Father!'

And Charlie gave a shout of joy, whilst the puppy sat up and barked shrilly, and then took refuge under the Colonel's chair!

'But, sonny, he must only stay in the compound. You must promise not to bring him into the bungalow.'

And a little reluctantly Charlie promised.

So he and Teddy, as he called the puppy, only met in the garden, where they romped and played, and had great fun together. But one day the Colonel came back from office to find Charlie asleep in his big chair on the verandah with Teddy curled up close to him; as he came near, the dog lifted his head and growled fiercely. The Colonel laughed, but he let him stay, and somehow after that he was always in the bungalow, and no one turned him out.

(Concluded on page 34.)

* Outcast or mongrel.



“They only laughed and jeered at him.”



"Teddy sprang at the snake."

TEDDY, V.C.

(Concluded from page 31.)

WHEN the hot weather came, they all went away to the hill station near the cantonment. It was not a well-known hill station, but a little place on the top of a great rock which rose out of the plains.

There was one great drawback to the place—it was infested with snakes. To get rid of them, the Sepoys came and set fire to the grass and the undergrowth round the Colonel's bungalow. It was a tremendous bonfire. Teddy and Charlie stood at the window and watched it, and the little boy clapped his hands with delight when he saw the natives hitting the flames with great green branches to put the fire out.

One day Charlie had been playing at Red Indians and scouts, and in doing so he had wandered some way from the bungalow. At last, tired out, he sat down under a tree and fell fast asleep, with Teddy curled up close beside him. But the little dog did not sleep; he was uneasy, and whined every now and then, his bright eyes keeping a sharp look-out.

Suddenly Teddy sat up, his body quivering, his head raised, for he had heard a faint rustle in the grass. The sound came nearer and nearer, and a large snake glided straight towards the spot where the boy lay fast asleep. When it caught sight of the dog it stopped and lifted its hooded head, hissing like an angry goose.

Teddy lay down with his nose on the ground, growling. Swiftly and silently the cobra came on. When it was a few feet away from Charlie, it suddenly reared itself up to strike. But Teddy, with a short, sharp bark, gathered his legs under him and sprang at the snake before he could do so. In and out of the coils of its body darted Teddy, with marvellous swiftness, and the reptile, now thoroughly roused, shot out his fangs again and again, just missing the dog every time.

The noise of the fight woke Charlie, and seeing the danger his beloved Teddy was in, he shouted for help. Then the snake, hearing his cries, turned upon him, and the child shrank back in deadly terror; but this gave Teddy his chance. Rid of the detaining coils of the cobra's body, he sprang forward, and fastened his teeth just below the cruel mouth which was open with the fangs ready to strike.

Charlie's shouts brought the Colonel and his wife and two Sepoys to the spot, but they were powerless to help the brave little dog, and could only look on, whilst the two rolled over and over in the mud, the snake and Teddy inextricably mixed up, so that it was impossible to strike the one without hurting the other. By degrees the cobra's movements became slower and slower. But still Teddy held on, for to let go would have meant instant death. At last the Colonel saw that it was possible to get a blow at the snake; it was given just in time, for Teddy let go and fell, a little white, quivering heap, at Charlie's feet. The Colonel bent over him, but he did not move, and the little boy in a transport of grief flung himself down on the ground beside him.

'Teddy, Teddy!' he cried, sobbing bitterly. 'Oh, Mother—Mother, he is dead. Look, he won't move.'

Then Mother stooped down and whispered, 'Brave little dog, dear little Teddy.' And a pair of bright eyes met hers; then with a short, sharp bark, he sprang up and, if ever a dog laughed, Teddy did then.

They carried him home in triumph, and if he had not

been a very wise little doggie he would have soon been spoilt by all the fuss they made over him. The Colonel declared he deserved the Victoria Cross—the little medal which is given 'for bravery'—and ever after the little dog was known as Teddy, V.C. L. PLUMER.

THE TABLE-NAPKIN.

WE are told that as early as the first century table-napkins were used in Rome. Each guest brought his own napkin.

In an old English play of 1616, the increasing use of forks, 'to the sparing of napkins,' is mentioned with approbation. Yet nearly a half-century later we find gossiping Mr. Pepys complaining that at a Lord Mayor's dinner only a few of the more important guests were provided with napkins.

It was a long time before table-napkins were used on big ocean steamers. Nowadays, however, about twenty thousand of them form part of the regular furnishing of a liner, and all these napkins, which must be sent to the laundry when the ship reaches port, must considerably swell the ship's washing-bill.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

2.—ARITHMOGRAPH.

A word of thirteen letters, connected with the mind.

- 1.—7, 8, 9, 13, 5, 10. A heavenly body.
- 2.—3, 2, 4, 11, 1, 5. Something to attract attention.
- 3.—1, 9, 8, 6. Quiet, free from disturbance.
- 4.—6, 2, 4, 11, 12, 3. Movement.
- 5.—13, 9, 6, 5. What we all have.
- 6.—4, 9, 6, 5. Not savage.
- 7.—9, 6, 7, 8, 5. More than sufficient.
- 8.—7, 8, 2, 4. Conspiracy.

C. J. B.

(Answer on page 75.)

ANSWER TO CHARADE ON PAGE 3.

Rain-bow.

THE WHITE ANT.

THIS little creature—well under an inch in length—is one of the most destructive insects in Africa. As dwelling-places it erects such huge heaps that in some localities, especially in the Congo, it converts an otherwise flat country into a hilly one.

The heaps are from twenty to fifty feet high, crowned, always, with several bamboo-trees, which add another thirty or fifty feet to their height. In many cases, beautiful ferns and flowers cover these lofty homes of the ants.

If the tiny but capable ant-folk remained at home they would be better loved. But they go about in huge armies, destroying everything they come across except steel and iron. The damage they can do in a single night is almost incredible. It is a curious fact that they attack only such portions of any object as are not exposed directly to the air. For instance, they will eat away the soles of boots, and leave the uppers standing. Not until you pick up the thing do you discover the damage done.

Men have found some use for the big ant-hills, for one (at least) in the Congo has been made into a look-out station for surveyors.

BED-TIME.

LITTLE folks at bed-time go
 Linger journeys than you know;
 Drowsily upstairs they tread—
 But their shadows dance instead
 From the nursery to the hall,
 Frolicking on staircase wall!

Little folks to Dreamland go,
 (Not without a toy or so!)
 Seek their fortunes all night long,
 Feasting with the fairy throng—
 Little folks in Dreamland stray,
 Coming home at break of day!

JOYCE COBB.

WHAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS.

'I'M not saying anything against girls. They're all right in time of peace, but what the country needs now is boys,' announced Percy, stalking up and down the playroom with his chest well out and the step of a Field-Marshal.

'Don't talk rot, old man!' exclaimed his brother. 'Boys are no more use than girls. It's men that are wanted.'

Percy took no notice, but continued: 'What good is a girl in battle? Who ever heard of one leading a forlorn hope?'

'I did!' again interrupted Bob. 'Joan of Arc. But we're not forlorn-hoping. England's doing awfully well. The paper said only this morning—'

'Oh, shut up, Bob!' said Percy. 'Joan of Arc's one in a million. I'm not counting girls like her. And then,' he continued, waxing eloquent again, 'girls are no use in an emergency. They lose their heads.'

'What about Grace Darling?' again broke in the irrepressible Bob. 'She had hers screwed on the right way, and fast enough too, it strikes me.'

Percy stopped his Field-Marshal stride, looking rather annoyed, but before he could begin again Bob turned to his sister. 'I say, Dollie, if you've heard enough of how useless you are, come out with me. I will take you to see the fellows drilling.'

Doris, who had been looking rather depressed, cheered up suddenly, but replied, 'I can't, Bob. Mother's out, and Sarah has gone to the shops. I must stay in till she gets back.'

'Right-o!' said Bob. 'I will come back for you in half an hour.'

He left the room with his usual cheery whistle. Half a minute later there was a thud, followed by a sharp cry. Percy and Doris rushed to the landing. On the floor below lay Bob.

'Oh, what shall we do? Where's Mother?' gasped Percy, helplessly.

'I fell off the banisters. Oh, my leg! Oh, Doris, I feel so funny—I—I don't know—' panted Bob.

'Go upstairs and get the sal-volatile out of Mother's medicine-chest, and bring some water!' commanded Doris, kneeling down and undoing Bob's collar as rapidly as she could, with trembling fingers, while Percy hurried away.

'Is he—?' he began in a horrified whisper, when he returned and saw his brother's white face.

'Be quiet, Percy!' said his sister, sharply, taking the medicine from him and pouring out a dose. 'Drink

this, Bob. Mother always takes it when she feels poorly. It will do you good.'

She raised the boy's head, and held the glass to his lips. Bob opened his eyes, drank it, and after a few minutes looked a little better.

'It's my leg, Doris,' he groaned again.

'Go for Dr. Price, Percy, and tell him what has happened,' said Doris. 'I will stay here.'

Thankful to get away from the sight of his brother in pain, Percy fled.

It seemed a long time to Doris, as she sat bathing Bob's face, before comfort, in the shape of Dr. Price, arrived.

'Hallo! what's this?' he demanded, kneeling down beside Bob. 'Ha! a broken leg. I guessed as much. We shall soon have that made right.' Then, turning to Percy, 'Run out to the car, my lad. Get my bag and the splints.'

When Percy returned, Bob was lying on the dining-room table.

'Now, you two can go and look out of the window while I set it,' said Dr. Price. 'Now, Bob, my man, it will hurt. Clench your teeth for ten seconds.'

Percy turned away and stuffed his fingers into his ears, but Doris remained where she was. 'I will stay with you, Bob,' she whispered. 'Hold my hands tight.'

Bob gripped them with a grasp that hurt painfully, but she said nothing, only smiled encouragingly at him. Dr. Price looked at her for a moment, and then applied himself to his work.

There was a short, sharp wrench—a smothered sob, and then—

'Brave boy!' said the doctor. 'Another drop of that sal volatile, Doris, and now we will bandage him.'

In a very short time Bob was in bed, looking very white, but much more comfortable, while the doctor sat by him, chatting cheerfully. 'Feeling better, my boy? That's right. Where's Mother?'

'Gone to see old Mrs. Kaye. She's ill,' said Doris in rather a quivery voice.

'Ah, well, I will run down there in the motor and bring her home. I think you want her more than Mrs. Kaye does just at present,' he said, smoothing the hair from Bob's forehead.

'Doctor,' whispered the boy, 'shall I—shall I—' He stopped, unable to go on.

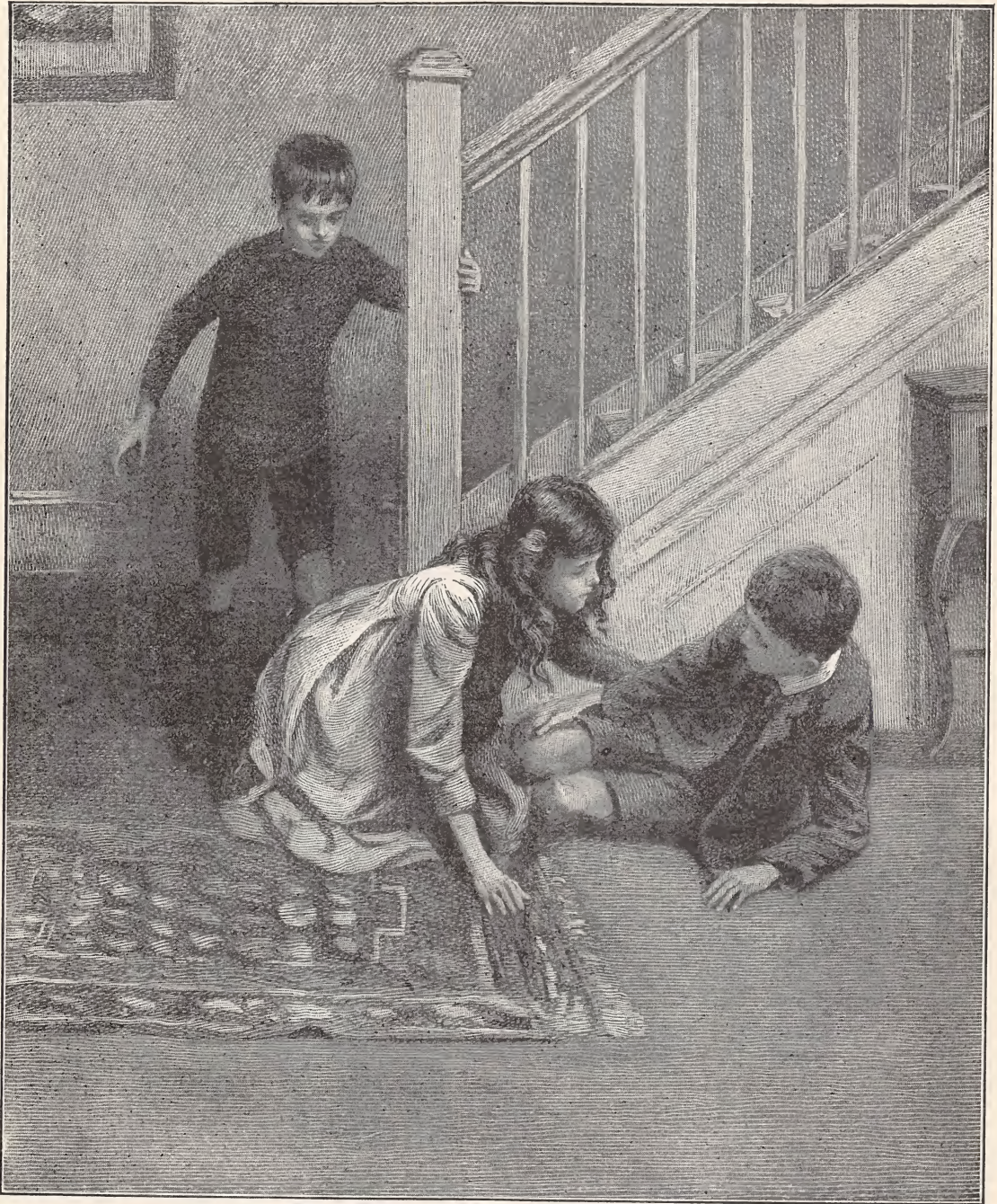
Doris grasped his meaning and caught the doctor's hand. 'Tell him he won't be lame!' she implored quickly.

'Lame? Nothing of the sort! You'll have to lie for a few weeks, and then you'll be kicking up your heels as merrily as ever, and sliding down the banisters again, unless'—with a quizzical look in his eyes—'unless in the future you think it safer to walk down the staircase. Good-bye for the present. Good-bye, little girl. You'll make a first-rate nurse some day.'

He left the room and ran downstairs, where he found Percy hanging about. 'Hallo, Percy,' he said; 'feeling all right now? You looked a little queer. There aren't many like that grand little sister of yours—plenty of nerve, keeps her head in an emergency, and won't desert a brother in trouble. She's the sort of girl the country needs. Good-bye; cheer up! Bob will be all right again in a few weeks.'

He sprang into the motor and drove away, leaving Percy thinking many things.

Upstairs in the bedroom Doris leant over her brother to make his pillow more comfortable.



"On the floor lay Bob."

'I say, Dollie, old girl,' he whispered with a shaky laugh, as he got his arms round her neck and gave her a bear-like hug, 'you mayn't be a "Joan of Arc," but you're a "Darling," and no mistake!'

C. E THONGER

ACROSS THE WATER.

II.—CHINA, THE LAND OF BRIDGES.

A LAND of bridges,—that is a name that might well be given to China, for, when we travel through the great Far Eastern realm, we find bridges every-

where, spanning rivers and canals, or leading roads across deep, rocky gorges. There are large bridges and small bridges, useful bridges and ornamental ones, bridges that are constructed in the most simple and primitive manner possible, and others that are triumphs of science and engineering skill.

Long ago, in the dim past, when a great part of Europe was unknown and covered with dense forests, China was a civilised and cultured country, with artists and architects who, in some ways, rivalled those of ancient Greece and Egypt.

In bridge-building, especially, the Chinese were pre-eminent, and many examples of their works still remain, for while the temples and dwelling houses in this country were usually fashioned of wood, bamboo, and other frail materials, bridges and triumphal arches were constructed of stone. It is believed that the Chinese architects discovered the science of making arches earlier than any other nation.

Before this art was acquired, bridges were made in the horizontal form: that is to say, they consisted of a flat roadway stretching from one bank of a river to the other, or supported on solid piles built into the stream. The famous bridge at Foochow is a fine example of this earliest type of Chinese work. It is raised on huge stone piles, many of which are formed of a single great monolith, and the roadway and balustrade are also constructed of blocks of stone. This wonderful bridge is very ancient; indeed, it is, perhaps, the oldest bridge in the whole world.

Another specimen of the same style of architecture is to be seen at Chapoo, but this bridge is smaller, and has only one opening. It is raised high above the stream which it spans, and is approached on each side by stone steps. On it an attempt has been made at ornamentation, for there are four roughly sculptured stone lions on the wide balustrades.

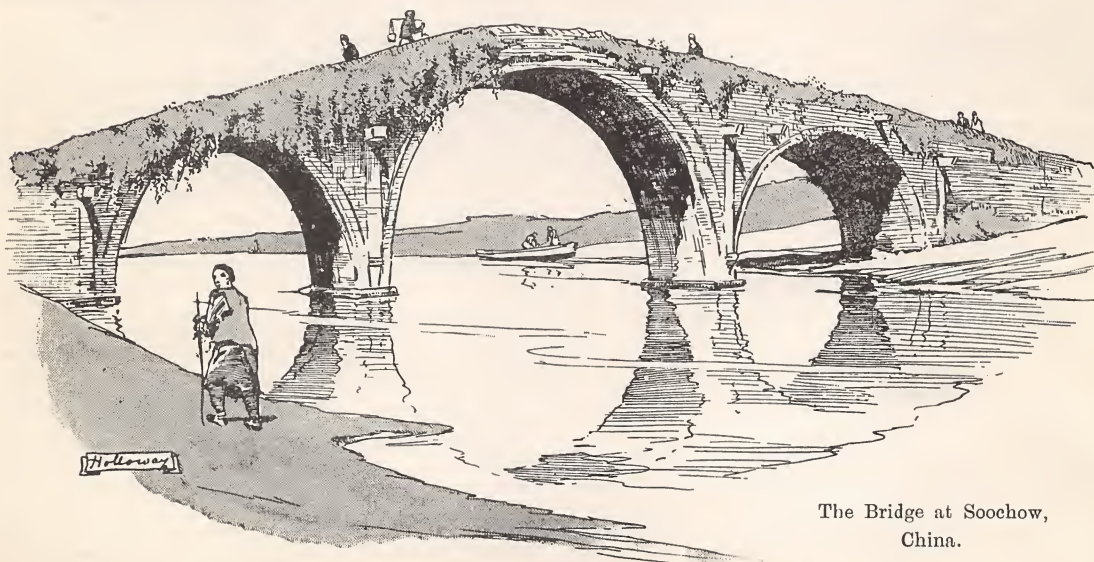
One of the most interesting and curious bridges in China is that at Yuk Shan, over the river Kan Kiang. It is called the Bridge of Nine Arches, and although very long, as its name implies, it is extraordinarily



A Chinese "Camel-back" Bridge.

narrow, the roadway being only a few feet in width. There is a curious superstition connected with this bridge, and Chinese merchants travelling along the river believe that it is very unlucky not to change from one boat into another before passing through the arches.

The story is that many years ago a great hero named Shy-Fangshoui erected the bridge for his army to cross the river, and being a magician as well as a soldier, he



The Bridge at Soochow,
China.

made this law, and laid a spell upon his work. Some time later a merchant determined that he would test the truth of the legend by going the whole way in one boat: but before taking his junk and its cargo under the bridge he went into a temple on the river-bank and began to pray and bow before the sacred images. An enchantment fell upon the man, so that he was unable to leave the place, and when, alarmed at his absence, his friends went to the temple, they found him still bowing before the shrines.

This continued for a whole year, and then the spell was removed, but the merchant, repenting his disbelief, resolved in the future to conform to the rules laid down by the sorcerer, and he built a line of store-houses, in which goods might be deposited while the necessary change of boat was being made.

A form of bridge which is peculiar to China is the graceful one-arch, or camel-back type; and many of these may be seen in the country. They are made of stone blocks, cut to form a curve, and as there is no keystone strong ribs of wood are fastened with iron bars to the inner side of the arch. A bridge of this description has flights of steps on either side leading to the top of the arch, which sometimes, as in our illustration, is surmounted by a small pagoda-like house.

These bridges are often twenty or thirty feet in height above the water, and they are built in this way so that junks with tall masts may be able to sail under them without the sails being lowered and the masts struck.

There is a bridge built in this manner, but with three arches, at Soochow, and another has no less than ninety-one openings.

Very often in China a bridge is presented to a town or village by a rich man, who wishes to benefit his native place. Sometimes these bridges are very beautiful, being decorated with lacquer work, and having the names of the charitable donors inscribed upon them in gold letters.

These are only a few of the many forms of bridges that may be seen in China. There are others, and indeed it is difficult to think of any type known elsewhere that has not its counterpart in this country. There are bridges with pointed arches, reminding one of early English architecture, others with the horse-shoe curves of Spain and Morocco, and others again that have tiled roofs as a protection from bad weather, and are almost exactly like the quaint covered bridges that are common in mountainous Switzerland.

Then there are bridges that are approached by long flat causeways, suspension bridges, bridges with houses on them, and dragon bridges where each pier is decorated with the symbolic dragon of China.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINÉY.

(Continued from page 26.)

CHAPTER III.

AFTER breakfast the next morning Uncle Charlie called the boys into his room. They looked at one another, fully expecting a lecture for remaining out so late the previous evening. They found him pacing the room, his hands clasped behind him, and his brows

bent. He looked formidable; but their minds were soon set at rest.

'Now, boys,' he said, 'I have not explained to you fully the meaning of that fragment of papyrus. I don't want to keep you in the dark. I want you to know what brings us here, and what my plans are; and more than that, I want you to take an interest in the search. Young eyes are sharper than old ones, if they have a little knowledge at the back of them, so that they know what to look for, and the value of things when they do see them. Now, sit down a bit. I will promise not to bore you with a long account. Really the subject is full of interest, and, as you are to have a hand in it, should be doubly so to you. Take the books off that chair and sit down, but don't put your feet on those papers.'

Uncle Charlie's virtues did not include tidiness; wherever he went he soon created a litter, his favourite place for books and papers being the floor; he had them under his eye there, and knew that they could fall no further.

'In ancient Egypt,' he continued, 'about the year 1380 B.C.—that's over three thousand years ago—a king reigned named Amenhotep IV. He was not a great warrior like some before and after him. The greater part of his reign was devoted to reforms of a religious nature. This was a comparatively enlightened age, and prided itself on being intellectual, and among a large class the numberless gods of old Egypt had fallen into disrepute; the worship of one god alone—the sun-god Ra, the sun being the symbol of light and life and energy—was gradually supplanting the worship of all the other gods. The King favoured this new movement—in fact, threw all his energies into helping it. He built new temples, and a new city—Khut-Aten, the Horizon of the Sun—which occupied a site that was supposed to be the centre of the world. He also changed his name from Amenhotep to one more fitting his new beliefs—'Okhenaten,' the spirit of the solar orb or disc. He persecuted in every way the followers of the old religion and the old gods. The priests of Ammon were dispersed and their temple at Thebes destroyed. The whole of this reign seems to have been spent in a struggle between the old and the new beliefs. By fair means and by foul the King carried all before him, at any rate on the surface; but the common people regarded the new order more and more with disfavour. This state of things lasted till the death of the King, when, as he left no son to succeed him, and three rival sons-in-law were striving for the ascendancy, stirring up the contending religious factions, the whole nation seems to have fallen into a condition of chaos. This ended the eighteenth dynasty. Probably we shall visit the tomb of this king—Amenhotep IV.—at Tel-el-Amarna, and see some of the fine sculptures representing the various scenes of his life. His body was afterwards removed to Thebes.

'Now, according to my papyrus, there lived in this reign a certain Tabe, a scribe and priest of Ammon. This man, in spite of his being a priest of the old religion, at one time stood in high favour with Amenhotep, but his latter experience justified the Bible injunction, "Put not your trust in princes." This man was the writer of my papyrus; and now I will read you a translation of it. I have had some difficulty in making it out owing to its tattered condition, and where the characters were too obscure and I

did not feel justified in supplying a word, I have left a blank.'

The Professor then read from the ancient papyrus:

'The words of one deceived by the world and abandoned by friends.

'Have not I, Tahe, priest of Ammon, tasted of power and the favour of the great King? Have not I stood at the King's right hand? The right hand of Nefer—Khepru—Ra—Son of the Sun. The Lord of Both Lands: I, called of him, royal scribe—the beloved.

'In the tenth year of Amenhotep—Son of the Sun—Son of Teie—was the King's countenance changed toward me. Poison was distilled into his ear, and his face became terrible—terrible as the face of Sekhmet that goeth before the battle host. Surely he had slain me, but for the skill bestowed upon me by the gods, and his delight being in the sacred books which I had found. Who but I—Tahe—priest of Ammon—the Royal Scribe—whom the gods have favoured with knowledge of tongues—could unveil to him the meaning of the sacred oracles? [a few words are missing here]. Then the King commanded and . . . [words are missing here] no more, and they bare me far from the . . . unto this desert place. A chamber have they prepared for me high up in the wall of the gate of the temple. A chamber where no man can come except he descend by a rope from above. Here have they brought all the sacred books and the tablets that I may transcribe for the King's collection—of the sacred books sixteen, and the tablets not a few. Two years have passed and the work proceeds. In that time have I not seen the face of man; food and whatsoever I need being let down in a basket from above to the open front of my chamber, my prison, my tomb. Neither know I the place of my captivity: mine eyes behold nothing but sand and rock.

'I commit these words to the winds of heaven as I have done others. As this slender messenger wavers in the air and falls, I pray the gods to direct it—guide it to the hand of some true man.

'By . . . sign . . . be . . . At the opening of this chamber burneth a taper one hour after sunset.

'Go, now, frail messenger, fall at the feet of some true man whom difficulties will not daunt.'

The boys listened with interest to these strange words, issuing—as it were—from the remote past—three thousand years ago; and felt, as there rose up before their mind's eye the solitary figure, high up between heaven and earth, looking out on the empty desert with despairing eye, and casting to the winds the record of his misery, that in those distant ages men were very like the men of to-day. The same sun to warm them. Much the same career of chequered prosperity and disappointment—the heart expanding with joy and contracting with grief and despair. And they realised as they had not before that the giant temples and tombs that make Egypt a wonder of the world, were not built for tourists to gaze at, or even for antiquaries to explore; but represented the very life-blood of the men of those times—their hopes, passions, and their daring enterprise, as much as the churches, railways, and telegraphs of to-day express our aspirations and activities. A very trite lesson this, but one that comes to us sometimes with the enlightening force of a personal discovery.

'Now, my theory is this,' continued the Professor. 'According to this fragment it was the tenth year of

the reign of Amenhotep that Tahe the scribe was imprisoned in this secret chamber, no doubt in a temple of the opposite religious faction. Two years he had been a prisoner when he wrote this. That would bring it to the twelfth year of Amenhotep. Now this king, as far as can be ascertained, reigned about seventeen years, and the last years of his reign were a period of such general disorder that the very existence of the scribe and his library of records and transcriptions might very easily have been forgotten. Probably his imprisonment was known to few—the King, his jailer, the chief priest of the temple, and a slave or two who attended to his wants and would not know who he was, and perhaps had never seen him. Probably, also, in time of tumult he was forgotten and died there. Possibly he escaped, and if so, certainly with nothing but his life. The priceless store of records would still be there. Another dynasty arose—a line of great warriors, achieving foreign conquests—a race that would give no thought to the work of an obscure scribe.

'My theory is that the records are still in the temple. I can see that in his heart of hearts Colonel Swain thinks this a wild-goose chase. Perhaps it is: then again perhaps it isn't. Stranger things than this have come to light in Egypt: and if it is a wild-goose chase and nothing comes of it, well, you boys will have had a good time of it and had your eyes opened to the big world, and as for me, it won't be the first time, by a good deal, I have been disappointed.'

'How are you going to find the temple—the right temple I mean,' asked Dick. 'They're pretty thick in Egypt from what I see.'

'Now you have put your finger on it, my boy,' replied the Professor. 'That's the difficulty, but I don't think that it is insurmountable. Thanks to Colonel Swain I have got my hand on the man who found the papyrus. As you know—or perhaps you don't know—the Colonel is in the Intelligence Department of the Egyptian Army. Now this man is at times employed by the department as a guide; you'll meet him one of these days: in fact you have already met him without knowing it—he has dined here at the *table d'hôte*. His name is Abdulla Mohammed of the Abada tribe—a native of Assuan. He knows Upper Egypt and the Soudan as well as any man living. He's as sharp as a needle and thoroughly trustworthy. Now, Colonel Swain is going to lend me that man. He will join our expedition at a certain place this side the First Cataract, and will conduct me to the exact spot where it was found: and it's hard lines, I say, if we don't then find a clue to the position of the temple mentioned in the papyrus.'

'If we get up as far as Wady Halfa, we may see something of the fighting,' said Dick, bristling up.

'No,' said the Professor. 'All is perfectly quiet, and has been for a couple of years, or else I should not venture so far up the river. Sir Herbert Kitchener is holding Wady Halfa with a supporting garrison at Assuan. Silently and grimly—without hurry, and without rest—that remarkable man is preparing for an advance into the Soudan. No one knows when that will take place—it may be another year, it may be two, but when he is quite ready, and not a day before, he will advance, as irresistibly as the Nile itself. As for ourselves—we may not get further up than Assuan. It all depends.'

(Continued on page 42.)



“‘I commit these words to the winds of heaven.’”



"He saw a white turban, a swarthy face."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 39.)

WHO has not read of the Soudan Mahdi? Who has not thrilled at the name of Gordon—the hero of Khartoum? A brief sketch—a time-table, to refresh the memory—will show how matters stood on the Nile in 1894—the year of the Professor's adventurous expedition.

In 1881 rose the Mahdi, or Promised One of Islam, Mohammed Ahmed, a fanatic of Dongola. Egyptian governors and garrisons, whose only notion of government was the squeezing of money from the poor Soudanese, had completely exasperated the down-trodden people, and paved the way for a terrible retribution. The whole Egyptian Soudan rose and flocked to the standard of the new prophet.

In 1883 a Native Egyptian Army, composed of eleven thousand men, under the command of General Hicks, ill-disciplined and half-mutinuous, were sent to withstand the Mahdi, and were completely annihilated.

The defeat of General Valentine Baker, with three thousand five hundred Egyptian troops, followed in 1884.

The Egyptian army had proved itself quite unable to contend with the forces of the Mahdi. The British authorities decided that the Soudan must be abandoned for the time. In the same year General Gordon was sent out single-handed by the British Government to see what could be done, and to withdraw the Egyptian garrisons from the Soudan. The task was impossible, and Gordon was shut up, surrounded by the dervishes—as the Mahdi's soldiers were called—in Khartoum the capital: and when the British Government dispatched a Relief Expedition under Lord Wolseley, which succeeded in defeating the dervishes at Abu-Klea, it was too late. Khartoum had fallen into the grip of the Mahdi, and the hero Gordon was killed. The British army retired in haste, and the Soudan was left to the tyranny of the Mahdi.

In the same year, 1885, the Mahdi died, and was succeeded by his khalifa or lieutenant—a still more bloodthirsty tyrant, and a ghastly reign of terror devastated the land. Then the curtain fell. With the British army withdrawn, the Soudan was left to itself for eleven years. Its scenes of horror were hidden from the eyes of the world.

The reconquest of the Soudan was a vital necessity to Egypt: but she had no army that could stand the fierce onslaught of the Mahdists.

Under the wise administration of Lord Cromer, who was now virtual ruler of Egypt, the prosperity and good government of modern Egypt was patiently built up: and under the British leaders Wood, Grenfell, and Kitchener the Egyptian army, which had formerly proved so poor a weapon, was reorganized and drilled with infinite patience into a high state of efficiency, and in 1891 Osman Digna, the leader of the Soudanese troops, was repulsed at Afafit. In 1892 Sir Herbert Kitchener—as he then was—became Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army, which was

planted in commanding positions at Wady Halfa and Assouan, and the work of preparation for an advance into the Soudan went silently but ceaselessly on.

This was the position of affairs in the year 1894.

CHAPTER IV.

TUESDAY was a busy day for the Professor's party. In the evening they packed their equipment in the felucca, or small boat, that Uncle Charlie had bought, which was to be towed astern of the dahabeeyah.

The boys were bubbling over with excitement as they watched the larger vessel taking in her cargo. Night had fallen, and a great light was flaring on the quay. They had made friends with the Reis, or captain, who, with great good-humour, had allowed them to explore the vessel and watch the work of lading. The *Isis*, as the dahabeeyah was named, was a two-masted vessel carrying the long, sweeping yards they had noticed as characteristic of the native craft. There were high deck cabins at the stern with accommodation for six passengers, and a spacious saloon; and in the fore part of the boat was the cook's galley, but there was no appearance of sleeping-quarters for the crew. Amidship the hatches were off the hold, and miscellaneous merchandise was now being lowered.

There were but few loungers on the quay after dark—two or three bare-legged dockers and one solitary native policeman; but it was a busy scene for all that, and the boys watched the crane going backwards and forwards with its piles of crates, boxes, and bags skilfully linked together with chains. The man perched up in the cab of the crane was lost in the darkness, but the long arm came swinging above their heads, across the span of darkness between the flare on the quay and the light on the boat. The clanking chain, its rapid fall, sudden steady and dead stop, at the sing-song of the man on deck who stood superintending the placing of the cargo, had an uncanny sound. Below, in the darkness of the hold, two lean, swarthy figures, stripped to the waist, worked silently, like underground gnomes, in the light of a small lantern which at one moment glistened on their polished skin, at another showed them in dusky silhouette.

Time passed, and the boys still stood looking on, or, by way of change, paced up and down the littered deck, or leaned on the rail, talking of the possible adventures that were in store for them.

Selim had left early: he had received a month's wages in advance, and had important personal purchases to make for the morrow.

The work was now slackening. The hold was nearly filled with cases, crates, and sacks of flour, rice, bags of dates, tinned goods, great packing-cases that were going to the front, drums of oil and paint, wire netting, tools, and bales of cloth (probably to be left at villages by the way). The Reis had left. The crew were squatting in the fore part of the vessel; the superintendent of the cargo ceased his sing-song and his fits of abusing the men, yawned, and yawned again, and disappeared on to the quay. The men who had been working below, but who now stood with chests level with the deck, wiped their perspiring foreheads with the backs of their arms, and gossiped with the worker of the crane, who leaned out of his cab into the darkness. Finally these also disappeared.

Dick yawned, and contemplated following their example. At that moment Harry came up to him,

looking perplexed. 'I say, Dick,' he said, 'did you see the tent put into the felucca? I have been looking over the things, and I can't find it. I wonder if they left it behind?'

Dick hurried to the stern, pulled in the painter and jumped into the boat. 'Two big cases,' he muttered; 'three bags, box, large portmanteau, small ditto, bundle—that's beds; bundle number two—mattresses and sheets. No, I don't see it. I remember its being brought down and put on the trolley—yes, I remember it quite distinctly, because I—'

'Do you think it's been stolen?' interrupted Harry.

'No, not since we packed the things in the boat—that's very certain. Let me see—all the things were brought straight from the trolley and put down there, on the deck, whilst I baled out the felucca and got the sand out of her. They were put down there in a heap beside the rail. I am sure the tent was there then.'

'Whilst you were getting the boat ship-shape, I went up the street to buy that bundle of cord, you know. Selim was here—surely he wouldn't have let any one take it!'

The boys looked at one another blankly for a moment; then Harry added: 'I wonder if it has got muddled up with the other passengers' luggage, and been stowed away down the hold?'

Dick was up in a minute, ran along the deck and dropped down into the hold.

One hears of searching for a needle in a bundle of hay, and that was how it appeared to Dick, when, squeezing himself beside the closely-packed cases and sacks, he got to the bottom—a great mass of packing-cases, boxes, sacks, and bundles.

'Stop, though,' he muttered; 'they would not be here with the cargo—the passengers' luggage would be put apart by itself somewhere.'

He squeezed himself further along, and found that the hold extended in that direction toward the after-part of the vessel under the stern cabins. This seemed a more likely place, but it was pitchy dark; he had already grazed his shins against a hoghead barrel, and smeared his jacket with a slimy substance, so he returned to the well of the hold, and, taking down the lantern which still hung there, he started again to explore the sternward gallery. He found it blocked with heavy articles, almost as completely as the well of the hold, but nothing in the shape of passengers' luggage. He was thinking of returning and trying in the opposite direction when the flicker of his lantern fell upon something that caused him to stagger backwards against the butt of the mast, which here penetrated between decks. From the shadow of some barrels that stood in the corner gleamed two fierce eyes. A moment later he saw a white turban, a swarthy face, white teeth glistening in a coal-black beard, and the lantern turned in his unsteady hand, throwing the shadow of its bars over the corner. As swift as thought a sinewy brown arm was outstretched, a hand was over Dick's mouth, and a long knife flashed before his eyes. The lantern dropped, and as it fell, the light flamed up and shone upon both figures—the swart, fierce face with gleaming teeth, the face of the boy too startled to realise his danger, the uplifted arm, the knife.

One instant they looked into each other's eyes—a lightning glance, like two meteors rushing into collision—then recognition sprang in both. The knife descended, but into its sheath; the hand was removed

from the boy's mouth. It was the dervish of the Mokattam Hills. The dervish spread his hands across his chest, bowed his head, and stood some moments before Dick in this attitude of humble submission, as if to beg forgiveness; then raised his arms obliquely, with the palms of his hands outstretched towards the upper deck; then dropped them in the same manner in the opposite direction, indicating the corner where he had been in hiding.

Still dazed by the suddenness of it all, Dick stooped, and picked up the lantern. It began to dawn on him that the dervish was here on the dahabeeyah a stowaway, hoping in this way to travel up the Nile and reach the Soudan. Dick tried by gestures to reassure him, and to make the escaped man understand that he had nothing to fear from him, and that the secret of his hiding-place was safe with him.

By this time he could hear Harry's impatient voice shouting down the hatchway, so he hastily inquired, in dumb-show, if the dervish were without food—if he were hungry. The dervish, still standing in his attitude of humility, bowed that it was so. Dick screwed his way among the cargo, as he had come, to find Harry half-way down the hold in search of him, fearing, as he had no reply to his repeated calls, to find that Dick had fallen and lay insensible at the bottom.

Dick did not wait to reply to his inquiries, but darted rapidly along the deck, and jumped into the felucca, and in a trice was speeding along the deck again, his pockets full of biscuits, and a jar of marmalade in his hand.

Harry looked in bewilderment at his pale face, as Dick again popped down the hold. In three minutes Dick was up on deck, dusting the knees of his trousers in absent-minded fashion.

'Well,' said Harry, with his mouth open in astonishment, 'you look as if you had seen a ghost!'

'So I have,' said Dick, screwing out a smile.

'Who?' gasped Harry.

'Old Omar, you know. The dervish we met on the Mokattam Hills. Never mind the tent now. Come on home.'

(Continued on page 54.)

A SUPERSTITIOUS KING.

IN the reign of Louis XI. of France, an astrologer foretold something displeasing to the King, who, in revenge, resolved to have him put to death. Louis sent for the astrologer, and ordered his attendants, at a given signal, to throw the man out of the window.

As soon as the astrologer appeared, the King said to him: 'You that pretend to be such a wise man, and predict the fate of others, tell me now what will be your own fate, and how long you have to live?'

The astrologer, seeing that he was in danger, answered with great presence of mind: 'I know my destiny,' he said. 'It is decreed that I shall die just three days before your Majesty.'

Hearing this, the King changed his mind, and did not have the prophet thrown out of the window. On the contrary, from that time forward he took particular care of the astrologer, doing everything in his power to prolong the life of one whose death was so soon to be followed by his own.

No doubt the clever astrologer's prediction did *not* come true, but it served him well.

THE FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

II.—THE THISTLE OF SCOTLAND.



IN my last article I traced the history of the English Rose up to the time of Queen Elizabeth; I stopped there because I mean to work out the history of the Thistle up to Elizabeth's time, and then carry it and the rose on together. First, as we did with the rose, we will consider it botanically. Now, no one knows which thistle, of all the many varieties which are known, is the particular one which was originally claimed as the Scotch national emblem.

The whole history is shrouded in doubt and legend, but to a true Scot a thistle of any kind is beloved beyond all other flowers. I have just read all that the chief botanists have to say about thistles, and of the fourteen they describe, they say the Musk Thistle is 'rare in Scotland,' the Watted Thistle is 'scarce in Scotland,' the Slender Thistle 'occurs in Scotland,' the Marsh Thistle 'is frequent in Britain,' which would, of course, include Scotland; the Creeping Thistle 'is abundant in Britain,' the Melancholy Thistle is 'frequent in Scotland,' the Scotch or Cotton Thistle 'is not wild in Scotland, although generally selected to represent the Scotch heraldic thistle.'

Now, if legend is to be trusted, it was, as you will hear later, a *prickly* thistle which gave rise to the

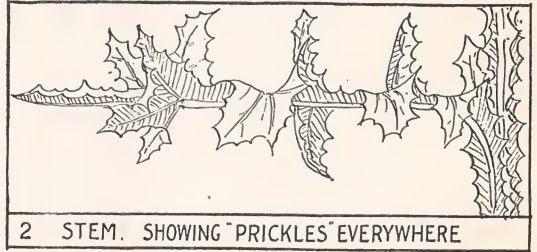


1 SCOTCH THISTLE. THE WHOLE PLANT.

adoption of the plant as a national emblem, so the Melancholy Thistle can be discarded, because it is not prickly! (I do not know whether its state of melancholy is caused by its want of prickles!) Any of the others might be *the* thistle, but I think I will describe the one known as the Scotch Thistle; for it certainly is a fine specimen, and as worthy or more so than others.

Now, the great interest of a thistle bloom, to my mind, is the fact that it is not *one* flower, but *many*. But I am getting along too fast! Here is, in fig. 1, a sketch of a whole plant of a Scotch Thistle; this is only a small plant, but it gives you an idea of its 'touch-me-not' sort of expression! The whole plant is

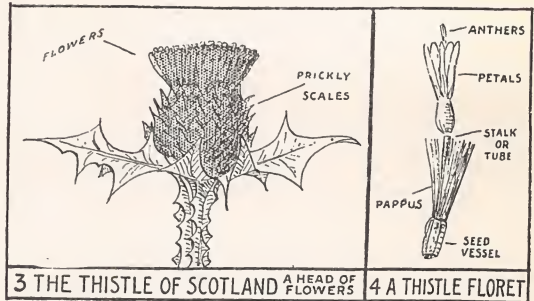
a mass of prickles: look at fig. 2, a single leaf and piece of stem. Here you see that the margin of the leaf is very wavy, carrying long sharp prickles all the way, some pointing upwards, some pointing downwards, making it unapproachable from any direction. Then, to make things worse, the margins of the leaf, instead of finishing off where they join the stem, must needs



2 STEM. SHOWING "PRICKLES" EVERYWHERE

go meandering down the stem, forming wings to the stem, and still armoured with these horrible prickles! So you see the stems are equally unapproachable!

Next, as to the flower or flowers. Fig. 3 shows you a 'head of flowers.' Now, the lower part is called the 'receptacle,' because it contains the flowers, it is not a calyx, but a mass of 'bracts,' each ending in a long, broad, sharp prickle. Fig. 4 shows you a single flower, or 'florete,' as it should be called, taken from the 'head.' The corollas, which are purple, are joined into a short tube after being separate at the top of the florete; the tube then contracts, and continues to the seed-vessel below. When the seeds form, the corolla falls, and the slender hairs, or 'pappus,' as it is called, is responsible for the future of the seeds. As the seed-vessels ripen they become loosened from their moorings, and



3 THE THISTLE OF SCOTLAND A HEAD OF FLOWERS

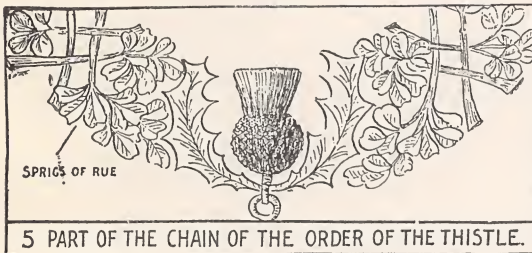
4 A THISTLE FLORET

the pappus, with the help of the friendly wind, or by catching to a person's clothes, or the fleece of a sheep, or some such animal, by minute teeth on the pappus, gets carried to pastures new, where it continues the traditions of its family.

From the point of view of *use*, I never heard any one say a good word for a thistle; it is looked upon by farmers as a pest, and of course if it once gets a footing and is allowed to bloom and develop its seeds, why thousands of new plants may be the result. I have always heard that donkeys like thistles, and there is an old riddle which runs, 'Why does a donkey prefer thistles to corn?' and the answer, 'Because he is an *ass*!' conveys my sentiments too! The Rev. H. N.

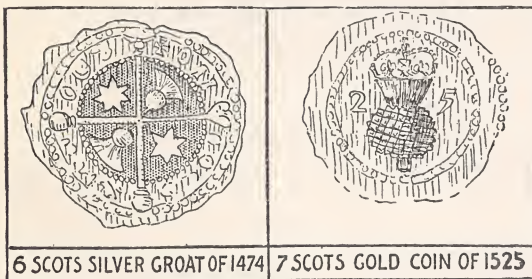
Ellacombe, in his book on *Plant Lore*, says that the fact that the Scotch have adopted it as their emblem 'is the one point in the history of the plant that protects it from contempt. We dare not despise a plant which is the honoured badge of our neighbours.' Now the origin of the adoption is a subject about which there is much diversity of opinion, but, after reading everything I can find on the subject I think it must have something to do with the following legendary history.

It is said that in the time of the Danes they made a *night* attack on the Scots. This was a very unusual action on their part, but they thought thus to surprise the Scots. All went well for some time, and they were creeping up to the camp as quietly as possible when a Dane, in the dark, trod on a thistle, and as he was barefooted the pain caused by the prickles made him cry out! This cry roused the Scots, who quickly drove off their enemy. The Scots thus felt that a thistle had saved them, and they are said to have there and then adopted it as their national emblem. This may or may not be true; but I cannot find a better reason, so I think we will let this one stand.



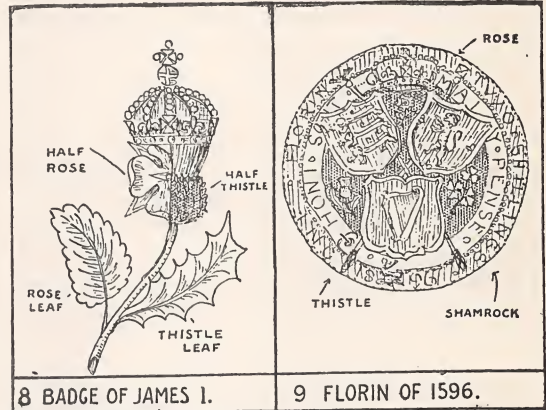
The thistle appears, of course, on the insignia of the Order of the Thistle, which is said to be the oldest British order of honour. The motto thereon engraved, *Nemo me impune lacessit*, that is, 'No one shall provoke me with impunity,' thus showing a spirit of independence and retaliation (fig. 5). The thistle, too, was adopted on the banner of battle by the Scots in place of the figure of their patron saint, St. Giles. The thistle was used on coins of Scotland, in 1474 on the silver groat (fig. 6), and in 1525 on the gold coins (fig. 7).

Now you will remember that James IV. of Scotland



married Margaret Tudor, and their grandson was James VI. of Scotland and James I. of England. To mark the joining of the two houses James I. adopted as his badge a combination of the rose and the thistle under the Royal crown. Fig. 8 shows you the arrangement, half a rose joins half a thistle under one crown, they both

springing from one stem and having a rose leaf and a thistle leaf on opposite sides. This was undoubtedly a bright idea and gave satisfaction to all concerned. He added the motto, *Beati pacifici* ('Blessed are the peace-makers'). Charles I., Charles II., and James II. all had the same badge. Anne made a variation by having a



whole rose and a whole thistle on one stem. And the thistle has come right down to us now and appears with our Royal arms and is still on our coinage. Fig. 9 shows you a sketch of one side of a two-shilling piece of 1896 and here you see the rose, thistle, and the shamrock. Look out for it; it is not on *all* two-shilling pieces, but on a great many, and also on some shillings.

F. M. BARLOW.

THE DANGERS OF OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

OLD London Bridge, which was demolished in 1832, a few months after the present bridge was opened, was a picturesque but cumbersome structure of which the citizens of London were very proud. Its construction was begun in the reign of Henry II., and thirty-three years elapsed before the bridge was ready for use in 1209. Though frequently injured by floods and accidents of various kinds, it was never entirely destroyed; and for more than six hundred years it served the citizens of London, and was still in use when it was superseded by the present bridge. Until about the year 1750 it was the only bridge across the Thames which the citizens of London could use.

The old bridge was a little over three hundred yards long, and had eighteen or nineteen arches and a draw-bridge. The arches and the piers were built of stone, and the piers rested upon stout piles of elm, which had been driven deep into the bed of the river, and covered with strong planks firmly bolted to them. In front of each pier, both above and below the bridge, a number of piles, or 'starlings,' were placed to break the force of any floating mass which was brought down by the river, or brought up by the rising tide.

The top of the bridge was forty feet wide, and rose about sixty feet above the level of the water. For a long time the bridge was loaded with houses, shops, and towers, most of which were arranged along the sides, though a few of them reached from side to side over the top narrow footway. Sometimes these buildings,

being constructed almost entirely of wood, caught fire; and occasionally some of them fell down into the river, doing more or less damage to the bridge in their fall. In 1757 the authorities decided to remove all the houses which were still standing, in order to save the bridge from destruction.

The piers of the bridge were wide and massive, while the arches were narrow, some of them so narrow and low, in fact, that a boat could not pass under them. The piers offered a great resistance to the flow of the water, and it rushed through the arches in strong, swirling currents, making a great noise, as if it were passing over a low and deeply submerged dam. It was a difficult and dangerous feat for watermen to take their boats under the arches, to 'shoot the bridge' as it was called, especially when the tide was running fast.

In bygone times a great many Londoners went from place to place by water, the river being so much pleasanter and more open than the narrow, ill-kept, and crowded streets. Most of those who had to cross the river hired boats, especially if they were a considerable distance from the only bridge. There were, therefore, very many watermen, who obtained their livelihood by rowing people from one part of London to another. Taylor, the Water-Poet, who was himself a waterman in the reigns of James I. and Charles I., tells us that there cannot have been fewer than forty thousand persons dependent upon the watermen. Though this number includes the wives and children of the boatmen, it is a very large one for that time, and helps us to realise how numerous the watermen were, and how much the river was used by Londoners.

If the passengers who went by water had occasion to pass the bridge, they very often left the boat before it reached the bridge, and joined it again after the waterman had brought it through the arches. Some, who were more than usually daring, stayed in the boat, and shot the bridge with the watermen. The diarist, John Evelyn, did so on the 19th of January, 1649, and was in great danger of being drowned. Long before this, in the year 1428, the second Duke of Norfolk nearly lost his life in shooting the bridge. His boat, when approaching one of the arches, ran upon the piles, and was capsized. The Duke leaped upon the starlings, and a rope was lowered to him from one of the houses on the bridge. Some others of his party were saved in the same way, but the rest were drowned. Similar accidents occurred from time to time so long as the old bridge existed.

A very plucky deed was witnessed from the bridge in the days of Henry VIII. One of the houses was at that time occupied by William Hewitt, a very wealthy cloth merchant, who had one little child, named Anne, to inherit all his wealth. One day a nursemaid, with Anne in her arms, was looking out of one of the windows, watching the river below, when the child slipped from her arms and fell into the water. The maid screamed, and her cries brought one of the cloth-merchant's apprentices, Edward Osborne, to the window. He saw in a moment what had happened, and leaping into the rushing current, he swam to the child's help, and succeeded in holding her up until a boat came to the rescue.

Both master and child were very grateful for this act of bravery, and when the child grew up into a beautiful woman, Edward Osborne married her. Meanwhile the cloth merchant continued to prosper, and in

1558 he was made Lord Mayor. When he died, he left an enormous fortune; and in due time Edward Osborne himself became Lord Mayor of London, and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth. He died in 1591, at the age of above seventy-three. His descendants rose higher and higher in social rank. His grandson, Sir Thomas Osborne, was created Earl of Danby in 1676, and became in 1694 the first Duke of Leeds. Thus did Edward Osborne, the son of a yeoman of Ashford, in Kent, become the founder of a noble family as a result of one of the chief dangers of Old London Bridge.

W. A. ATKINSON.

LITTLE DREAMS.

A CROWD of little wingèd Dreams,
When early stars were peeping,
Came sliding down their silver beams
To find the children sleeping.

And every little Dream that came,
Knew each its little duty,
And found a perch—no need to search—
Beside some 'sleeping beauty.'

One child had dropped asleep in tears—
A rosy Dream came lightly
And dried the tears and calmed the fears,
And left her smiling brightly.

Another Dream—all dark and grim—
Found out the boy who grumbled;
And all night long it haunted him,
And round him ran and rumbled.

To one afar from mother's care
And all familiar places,
A tender Dream showed clear and fair
The well-belovèd faces.

And one—the prettiest Dream of all—
Sought out the youngest tiny,
And she—she heard the angels call,
And saw their wings all shiny.

So every little Dream, you see,
Did each its little duty;
And some were sad, and some were glad,
But *most* brought love and beauty!

All night they fluttered here and there,
For pleasant slumbers making;
But—strange to say—they flew away
Just as each child was waking!

EDITH HARRISON.

SNAPSHOTS.

THERE was a hammering of fists on Maisie's bedroom door; then it burst open, and Gordon's dressing-gowned little figure darted into the room.

'Do wake up, Maisie!' he exclaimed. 'Something so exciting happened after you went to bed last night! A letter came from Uncle Tom, saying he'd take us both down to spend to-day at Henshurst Farm, and Aunt Louisa's sent us each a camera, and she's going to give a prize of five shillings to the one who takes the best six photos with it!'

He paused for breath, and Maisie sat up in bed, rubbing her eyes vigorously to make certain that she

was not dreaming. 'Five shillings!' she echoed. 'Oh, Gordon, we can buy the puppy from Mr. Giles!'

'Yes, if one of us gets it,' replied Gordon. 'But I haven't told you everything yet. Aunt Louisa's given Audrey a camera too, and she's coming with us to-day, and joining in the competition.'

'Oh, we mustn't let her get the prize!' exclaimed Maisie. 'She doesn't want it as much as we do.'

'We're going to motor down!' said Gordon. 'We've to be ready at ten. All right, I'm coming!' he added in a shrill voice, as Nurse's voice was heard in the distance, proclaiming the bath.

The drive to Henshurst occupied nearly an hour, and when the motor at last drew up at the old farmhouse door, three very excited children scrambled to the ground. They had arranged to separate and go off in different directions to take their photographs, then they would meet at lunch-time, and tell each other what they had done.

Audrey was the first to reach home, but she had hardly found her way into the dining-room before Maisie and Gordon came running in.

'I have made a hopeless mess of it!' began Gordon dejectedly. 'Forgot to move the slide, and took three photos on one plate; so I've lost my chance of the prize.'

'I think I'm certain to win it,' announced Audrey. 'I photographed all the farm horses in the yard; Aunt Louisa loves horses. And I have still got one plate left, which I'm keeping for a snapshot of the pigeons when they're fed after tea.'

Maisie looked rather dismally at Gordon. She hadn't thought of horses, and her six plates were all finished now.

'Come along! We must brush our hair for lunch!' said Audrey, springing to her feet; and the two girls scampered away, leaving Gordon to his rather gloomy reflections.

Audrey would get the prize—he felt certain of that now, and it did seem so unfair, when she had plenty of money, and he and Maisie were longing for five shillings, so that they could buy the puppy. He stretched out his hand, and picked up Audrey's camera from the window seat. As he looked at it, and thought of his own mishap that morning, an idea darted into his head. Audrey had said that she had one unexposed plate left, and the camera was loaded now, ready for use. It would be very easy to turn the slide the other way round, so that the plate that had last been used would take the place of the unexposed one. Audrey would never notice it, and then she would take two photos on one plate, as he had done. A tumult of thoughts rushed into his mind. It wasn't fair—he knew that—but then it was equally unfair that Audrey should take the prize away from Maisie, who wanted it so much. Half unconsciously he had started pulling out the slide, and a moment later he had turned it round and put it back again, so that the exposed plate had changed places with the unused one. Gordon looked at it hesitatingly, while a fierce struggle waged in his mind, then, as he heard flying footsteps coming along the passage, he flung the camera on to the window seat and crossed over to the fireplace.

The door burst open, and Audrey rushed into the room. 'There's an aeroplane going over the garden!' she cried, breathlessly. 'My camera, quick!' And, seizing it in her hand, she raced out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

Gordon never forgot the wretchedness of the rest of that day, nor the misery of the drive back to London. He was thankful when he could leave the motor, and say good bye to his uncle and Audrey, though, as he did so, his eyes wandered miserably to the three cameras that lay on the seat between them. They were going to a shop for the plates to be developed, and in two days Aunt Louisa would decide who deserved the prize. Even the thought of the puppy brought no happiness to him now. He knew he would never enjoy it, and it would always be there to remind him of what he had done. Oh, why wasn't he brave enough to confess?

Three mornings later there was a letter addressed to Maisie lying on the schoolroom table. Gordon saw her flushed, excited face, and her fingers trembling as she tore open the envelope, and he opened his French verb book, and began repeating 'parler' fiercely to himself. A little cry from Maisie made him look up suddenly.

'Audrey's got the prize,' she said, slowly.

The French verb book fell with a clatter to the floor, but before Gordon could speak the door was flung open, and Audrey herself rushed breathlessly into the room. Her hat was on the back of her head, her fair hair streaming wildly in all directions, and in her arms she carried the coveted brown puppy!

'Have you heard?' she cried. 'I've won the prize—but I didn't deserve it a bit. Such a funny thing has happened! Without knowing it, I took two photos on one plate. I suppose I forgot to turn the slide round—like you did, Gordon—but, instead of the plate coming out all fogged and muddled, it is a splendid success! It was the old thatched cottage, and the aeroplane in the sky. You see, if the second photo had come out properly, the aeroplane would have been up at the top, and all white sky beneath; but by taking it on the top of the other one it just looked as if it were floating over the cottage! Aunt Louisa said it was the prettiest picture of all! I'm sure she gave me the prize for that, and it really didn't seem fair, as all your photos were quite good, Maisie, and it was very careless of me—'

'Do stop a minute! interrupted Gordon. 'There's something I must tell you at once.' And, without hesitating for a moment, he poured out all the story of his wrong-doing.

When he had finished Audrey jumped up from her chair. 'How simply splendid of you to tell me!' she said. 'You might so easily have left it, and I should never have known.'

'But I should never have been happy,' put in Gordon. 'I have been more miserable these last three days than I ever was in my life before.'

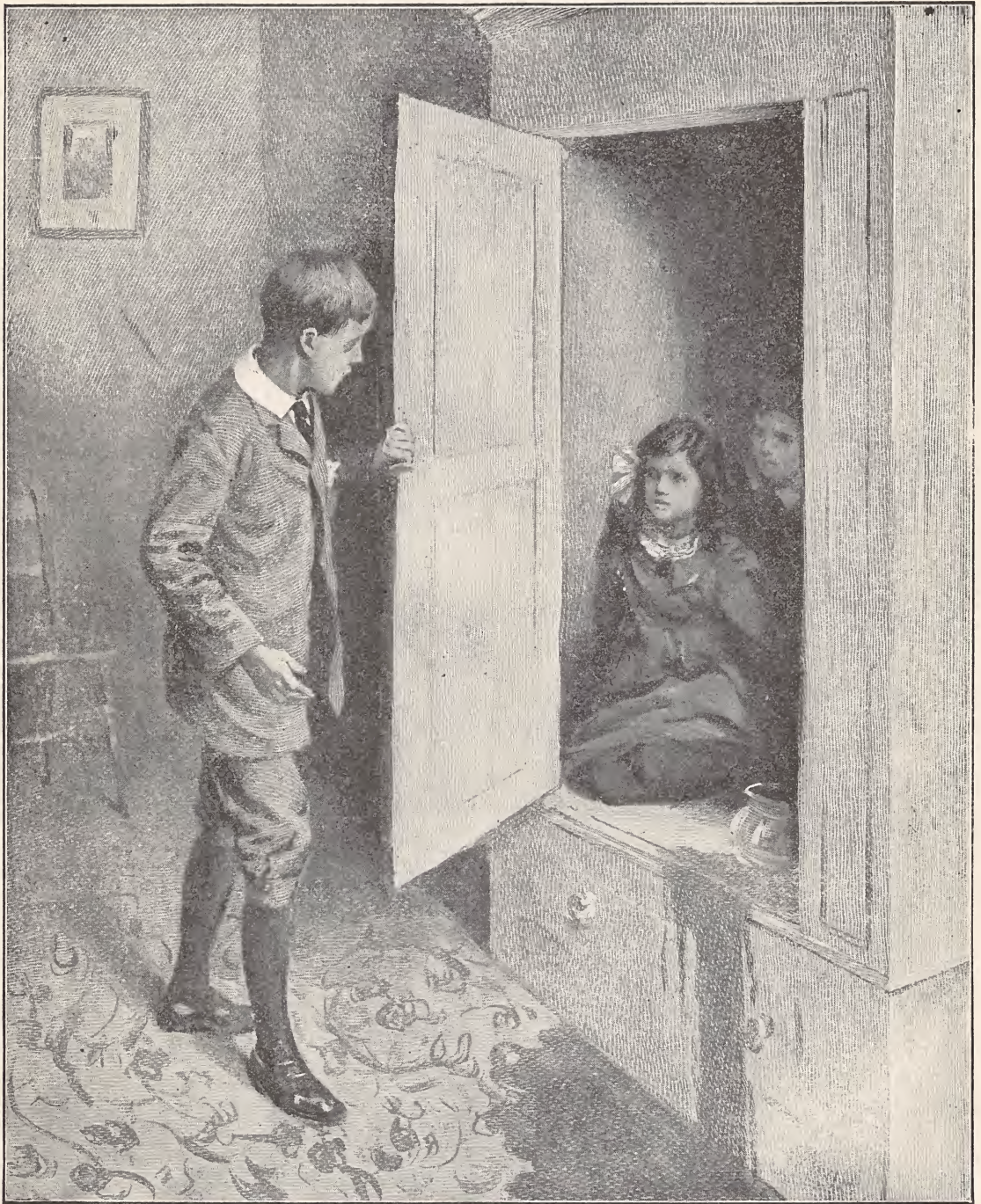
Audrey had crossed over to Maisie, and she plumped the puppy into her lap. 'That's my prize,' she said. 'I bought him for you. I made up my mind I was going to, and that's why I wanted to win so much. I knew you would have him, anyway; but if one of you had won I shouldn't have had the niceness of giving him to you.'

Maisie clasped the wriggling little body in her arms, in an ecstasy of happiness, as she tried to put her thanks into words.

Audrey turned to go, and her face was radiant with joy as she looked back from the doorway. 'He's wagging his tail so hard!' she laughed. 'He will upset the inkpot in a minute!'



"She plumped the puppy into Maisie's lap."



“Edgar faced the culprits in open-mouthed astonishment.”

A CONSPIRACY IN A CUPBOARD.

'DI, the goldfish have got young ones!' Desmond paused on the threshold of the nursery door to watch the effect of his words, and Diana looked up from her copy-book, and stared at him in wide-eyed, incredulous silence.

'Not really!' she gasped at last.

'Honour bright! They're in Edgar's room. Come and see.'

Not waiting for a second bidding, Di scrambled to her feet, and a minute later the two were standing on tiptoe before the big glass bowl on their brother's dressing-table.

'Two! What darling little things!' exclaimed Di, delightedly. 'But Darby and Joan don't look a bit pleased. They have swum right over to the other side of the bowl. No do you,' she added, suddenly, catching sight of Desmond's frowning face.

'It's a sell for me,' complained Desmond, dismally. 'Just think, if only they'd been born yesterday instead of to-day, they'd have belonged to me, and I needn't have sold Darby and Joan to Edgar. I could have got enough money for the little ones to pay for Mother's present, and kept my two after all.'

Di looked up sympathetically. 'Did you mind losing them awfully?' she asked.

Desmond nodded. 'Awfully. I have had them for over a year, and they're so rippingly tame; and besides, they're the only pets I've got.'

'Perhaps Edgar will give you the babies,' suggested Di, hopefully.

'Wouldn't give twopence for them,' replied Desmond. 'It's Darby and Joan I care about—but they have to go, so it can't be helped; and I have bought a lovely blue china cat for mother, with a green tail.'

Diana did not appear to have heard the last words. She was gazing fixedly out of the window, and in the depths of her large grey eyes there lurked some suggestion of the plan that was forming in her mind.

'Desmond,' she said at last, turning suddenly to her brother, 'Edgar hasn't seen the little ones, has he?'

'Can't have,' replied Desmond. 'He hasn't been in since lunch, and he would have told us if they had been there this morning.'

'Well, I have thought of a plan. It isn't fair that he should have them as well as Darby and Joan, and I think they're just as much yours as his.'

'More,' agreed Desmond, readily, 'because I've had Darby and Joan—'

'Well, I'm going to take them out of the bowl, and not tell Edgar,' interrupted Diana with decision. 'And we will keep them till they're a little bigger, and then you can sell them to Brown, and buy Darby and Joan back from Edgar. He's sure to be tired of them in a few days.'

Desmond nodded an eager assent—perhaps more vigorously than was necessary, but there was a twinge of pain in his conscience which he wanted to forget.

Diana's hand was on the door-handle. 'I'm going to bag a jam-jar from the pantry,' she said, and a moment later the sound of her footsteps died away in the passage.

There was some difficulty in transferring the fish from the bowl to the jam-jar, as the tiny, slippery creatures wriggled through a hole in the net each time Desmond captured them; but at last one was safely

removed to the new and rather cramped accommodation. Desmond was pursuing the other with feverish determination, when Diana clutched his arm in sudden alarm.

'Desmond—Edgar!' she gasped. 'I hear him coming!'

In terror Desmond dropped the net on to the floor, and seizing the jar in his hands, looked round despairingly for a way of escape. 'The cupboard!' suggested Diana in a panic-stricken whisper, as she picked up the bowl with its three startled occupants. Almost before the words were out of her mouth, Desmond had sprung forward and opened the door of the tall press, and when Edgar came into the room a moment later, all was still without. Inside the cupboard the two little figures were crouched in breathless silence, staring with wide eyes at the thin cack of light that came through the closed door.

'He's going to do his prep. on his bed,' whispered Diana, a minute later, as the sound of a pair of boots being flung to the floor was succeeded by the creakings of a mattress, and then there was silence.

'We shall be here for hours,' complained Desmond under his breath. 'Have you got the bowl all right?'

'I have stuck it on a pile of suits in the corner,' returned Diana. 'I wish he'd go. My foot's gone to sleep.'

Half an hour went by before a further creaking of the mattress proclaimed that Edgar's prep. was finished, and Desmond heaved an audible sigh of relief as he heard him spring to his feet and shuffle into his shoes.

'Christopher Columbus!' exclaimed a voice on the other side of the door, and the two in the cupboard felt their blood run cold. A moment later the handle was jerked backwards, and Edgar faced the culprits in open-mouthed astonishment.

'What on earth are you up to?' he said at last. 'Why are you stowed away in here, and where's all the water come from?'

'Water?' repeated two voices faintly, in one breath.

'All over the floor. What on earth have you spilt?'

Diana's hand went instinctively to the bowl in the corner, and a moment later a little cry escaped her lips.

'It's the goldfish bowl!' she exclaimed in a frightened voice, lifting it into the light as she spoke. 'Desmond, they're dead. Look! All the water's gone!'

She held up the pitiful object in her shaking hands and the two boys looked on in silence.

'You must have cracked it getting in,' said Desmond at last. 'It's simply laked away, and we never heard it.'

'And they're all dead,' groined Diana, 'all except the baby in the jam-jar, and the whole thing's my fault. We'd better explain,' she concluded, looking towards Edgar.

Edgar listened in silence as between them the two told him all that had happened; then he laid down the sponge with which he had been mopping the carpet, and rose slowly to his feet.

'The little ones didn't belong to Darby and Joan,' he said. 'I bought them from a man in the street this morning. They were only twopence each, so I thought I'd have them, and give the others back to you, Desmond. I knew you minded letting them go, and it was decent of you to sell them so as to get the present for Mother. Anyhow, I'm afraid you've lost them now.'

He picked up the two cold little bodies in his hand, and walked towards the door, as in a silence of complete humility Diana and Desmond exchanged glances. They waited till his footsteps had died away in the passage; then Diana's voice came very humbly.

'I have got twopence,' she said. 'Let's go and get another little one for him, to go with the one in the jam-jar.'

Desmond nodded. His heart was too full to speak, and he put an unnecessary amount of energy into scrubbing the carpet with Edgar's bath towel. Then at last he looked up.

'And I will swap my new knife to Cuthbert Brown for his glass bowl,' he said, as he wrung a stream of dingy water into Edgar's jug.

A lump came into Diana's throat as she watched the moisture trickle from the towel, then, knowing what an effort the resolve had cost, she turned away, and bore her punishment in silence.

REFORMED BY A PICTURE.

THE rope of Ocnus' is an old expression denoting profitless labour. The saying is derived from a picture painted many centuries ago by the Greek artist, Polygnotus (460-430 B.C.), representing a poor man diligently weaving a rope of straw, while, standing behind him, a donkey is eating the rope as fast as it is made.

Ocnus—so runs the story—was a hard-working Greek, whose extravagant wife got rid of his money as quickly as he earned it, thus keeping him perpetually poor. The kind artist, Polygnotus, hearing of the man's tribulations, painted this picture of the weaver, the ass, and the rope. Fortunately the wife of Ocnus took the lesson in good part; in fact, it so wrought upon her that she ceased to be extravagant, and became a model of frugality—a change which had a most happy effect upon her husband's fortunes.

E. DYKE.

THE CORRIDOR OF TEMPTATION.

ONCE upon a time there lived a King of Serendib, called Nabussan, who was one of the best princes in Asia, and greatly beloved by his subjects. All sang his praises, but many people robbed and deceived him also. Indeed, the desire to steal his treasures was common to his most ardent admirers. The Receiver-General of the island set the bad example, and the other officials followed him to the letter.

The King was fully aware of their dishonesty, and had changed his treasurers several times on that account. But he never dared to alter the old custom of dividing the royal revenues into two unequal parts. The smaller always went to the Crown, and the larger to the Ministers.

This unhappy state of things worried the good King sadly, so he summoned a wise man, named Zadig, to his presence, and told him his troubles. Then he added: 'Cannot you, who are so wise, tell me how to find an honest treasurer?'

'Certainly, your Majesty,' answered Zadig. 'I believe I know a sure way of discovering a trustworthy man.'

'Then tell me your plan, my friend,' cried the delighted King, embracing the seer warmly.

'I should ask all those who apply for the post to dance, your Majesty, and the man who dances most lightly is certain to be the most honest man there.'

'You are surely jesting, my wise Zadig: it would be a funny way to choose a treasurer. Why, you can't really mean that the man who can tread a minuet most lightly, would be the most clever and trustworthy financier?'

'I don't promise he will be the cleverest, but I certainly think you will thus discover an honest man.'

Zadig spoke so earnestly that the King fancied he must be about to resort to some supernatural test for finding out a trustworthy treasurer, and answered doubtfully: 'I don't like using supernatural means for such an end, my friend.'

'I was thinking of a simple test: and if your Majesty tries my plan, I feel confident it will be successful.'

Nabussan, King of Serendib, was far more surprised to hear that his friend's secret was so simple, than he would have been to learn it required a miracle to discover what he sought. He answered coolly: 'Well, I leave you quite free to use whatever means you judge best in making your choice.'

'Your Majesty will gain more than you expect by the trial,' remarked the wise man gravely.

* * * * *

That very day, Zadig wrote a royal proclamation, saying that all the applicants for the office of Royal Treasurer were to present themselves at the hour of noon next day in the King's ante-chamber, and this proclamation was duly posted on the palace gates.

At the appointed hour, sixty-four applicants stood at the palace gate. The royal fiddlers were already in attendance, and played gaily as they headed the procession into the ballroom. The guests had to pass through a dark corridor to reach it, and owing to some oversight had to stay there for a few minutes, as the door of the State ballroom was locked.

Now, the King's treasures were stored in this dark corridor, and were not kept in glass cases, like most Crown jewels, but strewn about carelessly. In fact, heaps of rubies and diamonds lighted up the gloom.

When the ballroom was at length thrown open, and all the applicants had taken their places, the King gave the signal for the dance to begin. To his surprise, he had never seen more ungraceful dancers. Their heads were bowed, their backs bent, and their hands glued to their sides. He whispered to Zadig: 'What an awkward set of men!'

Out of the whole sixty-four applicants, only one moved his feet freely, held his head erect, and with outspread arms and open jacket, trod the measure like a born dancer. As the wise man's eyes rested on this graceful figure, he said to the King: 'That is your Majesty's honest treasurer.'

Then the King called the dancer to his side, embraced him warmly, and declared him his Royal Treasurer. The other applicants were searched by the guards, and as they had all stolen some of the Crown jewels during the few minutes they had spent in the corridor, they were thrown into prison to repent of their crimes. The good King was very sorry to know that out of so many applicants he had only been able to find one honest man.

From that day the dark corridor was always known as the corridor of temptation.

MARY FAY.



“ ‘That is your Majesty’s honest treasurer.’ ”



“Laughing to see him blunder by!”

HIDE AND SEEK.

IT'S jolly being a rabbit,
Whatever people say—
We've heaps of time for eating,
And just as much for play.

And if we get some hustling
From neighbour and from foe,
We take a deal of catching,
As all who chase us know!

When Reynard comes marauding.
We scent him in the brake,
And very seldom wander
Too far for safety's sake.

We saw him pass this morning,
And Bunny Brown and I
Half split our sides with laughing
To see him blunder by!

P.

A FAMOUS THRONE.

IN the time of the Mogul Emperors, Shâh Jehân (1627-1658 A.D.) and Aurungzebe (1658-1707 A.D.), the 'Peacock Throne' stood in the audience-hall of the Citadel at Delhi, in India. It measured six feet long by four feet wide. Its support was solid gold—six feet of it—encrusted with precious stones. The throne itself, also of gold, was inlaid with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds, and surmounted by a golden canopy. It took its name from the figures of two peacocks placed behind it. Their outspread wings glistened with gems, and between them stood the figure (life-size) of a parrot, said to have been cut from a single emerald.

THE FIDDLER'S CALLANT.

IN a small London house, which I know well, lived and died—long before I knew the house—a man who in his boyhood had once been a 'fiddler's callant.'

The boy's name was Robert. He was born far away from London, and more than a century ago, in a little Northumbrian village. He was the youngest of a large family, and his mother was Scotch. At one time Robert had to walk three miles to school. He usually left his dinner-wallet at the cottage of a lame fiddler, who was known as 'Doddy.' This man earned a living for himself and his old mother in a rather curious way. According to ancient custom, the gentry and farmers of the Scottish border used to entertain during their sowing season any wandering fiddlers who liked to visit them. Doddy was one of those who reaped a 'harvest' at the farmers' seed-time. Regularly as spring came round, he would buy an old, worn-out horse, and set out, taking with him a boy—called 'a fiddler's callant'—to look after the horse and the fiddle-case. At every farmhouse which he enlivened with his tunes, Doddy received, besides food, sixpence in money or sixpenny-worth of corn. Thus, after his month's outing, he returned with a good bit of cash, and a sufficient supply of barley and oats to serve him for the greater part of the year.

One springtime, Robert, to his great delight, went with Doddy on his round. His father was not so well pleased, for to be a 'fiddler's callant,' he said, was to be a 'beggar's lackey.'

A quaint picture the pair must have made, as they rode off on their lean horse, which was covered with sacks: the long, spare fiddler in front, and chubby Robert behind with the fiddle-case strapped to his back.

As the boy had never before been five miles from his father's cottage, he found the incidents of the journey very exciting. He was well treated by the kindly farmers, and had lots of fun. During his round he picked up many tales and legends, which, when he was older, he wrote out, and some of which, I think, he had printed. Long afterwards, he said that he had never had such a spell of happiness as that he enjoyed when he was a 'fiddler's callant.'

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 43.)

CHAPTER V.

THE sun was rising the next morning when the Professor's party crossed the bridge on their way to the port. The tent was found, and was now being brought down. In spite of Dick's certainty, it had been left behind at the hotel the previous day. They were in high spirits; the Professor stepped out as eager and buoyant as the youngsters. Selim swaggered up in a new crimson fez, with blue tassel and a gaudy striped sash about his waist, into which was thrust an enormous dagger, in an embossed sheath. This young man evidently felt that he was now on his way to realise his wildest dreams.

The air was pleasantly cool, and, though it was early, the quay was all alive. They trotted up the gangway, carrying their hand-bags and lighter luggage, and were welcomed by the Reis, who beamed with complacency. All litter had been removed, and the decks were clean, though scarcely dry; and a boy was lazily polishing the brass hand-rails of the steps that led to the upper deck, which formed the roof of the stern cabins, and over which two men were now stretching an awning, to protect the passengers from the sun in the heat of the day. They examined the cabins, and found that each passenger had a little cubicle to himself. These were ranged round the sides, the centre being the dining-saloon.

'All quite nobby,' as Dick remarked.

The deck was cleared of all luggage, excepting a pile amidships covered with a tarpaulin. Dick, mindful of his last night's encounter, gave a sidelong glance at the hatchway, and saw that the covers were now on and securely fastened by a long iron bar, which ran the full length of the hatch and fitted into slots. This also was covered with a tarpaulin.

Three other passengers appeared on the scene, an Arab and two young British officers, and it appeared that this was the full complement. The Arab seemed to be a man of some importance. His tasselled fez was surrounded by a turban, a white flowing garment descended below his knees, and was girded with a broad sash, which held a leathern pouch and a brace of pistols, and a richly-embroidered waistcoat showed beneath the haik, or toga, which hung from his shoulders. His carriage was dignified, his face kindly and composed,

but his eye was alert and penetrating. The boys stood in some awe of this personage.

The two young English officers looked smart in their khaki uniforms, and excited a pang of envy in the breast of Master Dick. They were just out from England, and were bound for Wady Halfa, but, having leave and time on their hands, were mixing pleasure with business, and seeing as much as possible of the sights and wonders of Egypt. Lieutenants Maitland and Stoddart were frank, genial young fellows, and, after the first veneer of reserve had peeled off, condescended to Dick and Harry, and became very good travelling companions. They were really not much more than boys themselves, and thoroughly enjoyed being 'out on their own.'

Now the start had come; some one fired a gun as a signal or salute. The sailors hopped about the deck, loosening ropes and tightening others. Two men in a boat, to which a hawser was attached, tugged at the oars to haul the vessel from her berth, and the bow began to move slowly out into the stream, and everybody turned to everybody else, saying, 'Now we are off!' Up went the sail at the foremast. Every one chattered with animation. A little crowd on the quay set up an Eastern imitation of a British cheer, and Selim whistled, 'God save the Queen.'

Yes, they were off! They soon left the little crowd behind, and slid slowly past the other vessels in the port. The water rippled at the bows, and the boat sped merrily along in the steady North wind.

Dick and Harry looked round, as much as to say, 'What is next on the programme?' Selim had settled himself forward, sucking one of a stock of sugar-canes, which he had bought. The Professor was conversing in Arabic to the Arab Sheikh, and the two officers were still leaning over the side of the boat watching the minarets of Cairo disappear in the distance.

Harry said, 'I'm going to be on the look-out to see what I can get for my collection. They say that Egypt is an El Dorado for the naturalist, as far as small fry goes—reptiles and insects and things—but I haven't seen a single butterfly yet. I must get some of those scarabeus beetles they talk so much about—the sacred beetles, you know. They say there are lots of them on the riverside. The mud-banks are covered with their tracks. Funny little beggars: you can see them, so they say, rolling their eggs done up in little clay balls—rolling them up the bank, and when the mother can't manage it herself, the father shoves up behind. I'll ask Uncle Charlie about them, when he's done talking to that Arab swell.'

Now Dick had not forgotten the dervish, you may be sure. He looked critically at the hatch that covered the hold, and glanced round at the passengers, the Reis and the crew; then strolled along the deck toward the bows. He stood with his hands in his pockets looking at the boatmen with an engaging smile on his countenance which the good-natured fellows returned with interest, nudging one another in enjoyment of some hidden joke. Then he addressed a man in a long shirt-like garment who stood at the bow with an enormous pole, sounding the depths. Dick nodded his head and beamed on him. The man smiled. Dick asked him what the time was by his chronometer. The native said 'Allright.' Then Dick grasped the anchor with both hands, bent his back and made as though he would lift it, but gave in with a grunt. Then he raised

a weighty iron ring which was almost as much as he could manage, and moved it up and down and out like a dumb-bell, at which the men laughed again. He then moved away a little to the winch used for raising the anchor, and after lazily putting his foot on the handle and giving it a swing, took hold of it with his hands and gave it a few turns: then moved to the cook's galley and stood looking in, then he moved off to examine a coil of rope with apparent interest. In fact, he was behaving like an inquisitive shore-going young monkey; but he was also working his way toward the hatch of the hold, and when he reached it, after poking it with his foot and giving a sly look round, he bent to see if the iron bar were fastened down, or if he could lift it from the slot. After satisfying himself that he could do so, he looked all round the fittings with apparent indifference, and then lounged to the side of the boat and gazed over in meditation.

A few minutes later he was making his way aft and going to the little cabin that was allotted him next to Harry's. He shut the door and made a survey of it. The bunk occupied one side, and there was a stool to sit on and for the rest there was scarcely room to turn round in. He went down on his knees on the floor, pulled up the strip of carpet that adorned it, and poked about like one who had lost a collar-stud: then sat on the edge of his bunk and whistled quietly and plaintively to himself for full ten minutes. Appearing on deck again, he heard Uncle Charlie's voice calling him.

'Dick,' said he, presenting him to the Arab Sheikh. 'This is Obed-ben-Hesser, an Arab Chief and merchant.'

Dick raised his straw hat, but did not know how to greet the Sheikh: he knew no words of Arabic, and to say in English, 'Good morning. How do you do, sir?' seemed silly. There was a grave smile on the Chief's handsome face as he placed his hand on Dick's shoulder, saying:

'I speak three four words Inglis—Good morning. How-do-you-do?' with a slight motion of the hand, adding, 'dis Dick, dat Harry—ver good. Nice Inglis boy—we shall good friends be.'

He smiled again into his beard, and as there seemed nothing more to be said, Dick and Harry slipped behind, and left the Professor and the Sheikh to continue their conversation in Arabic.

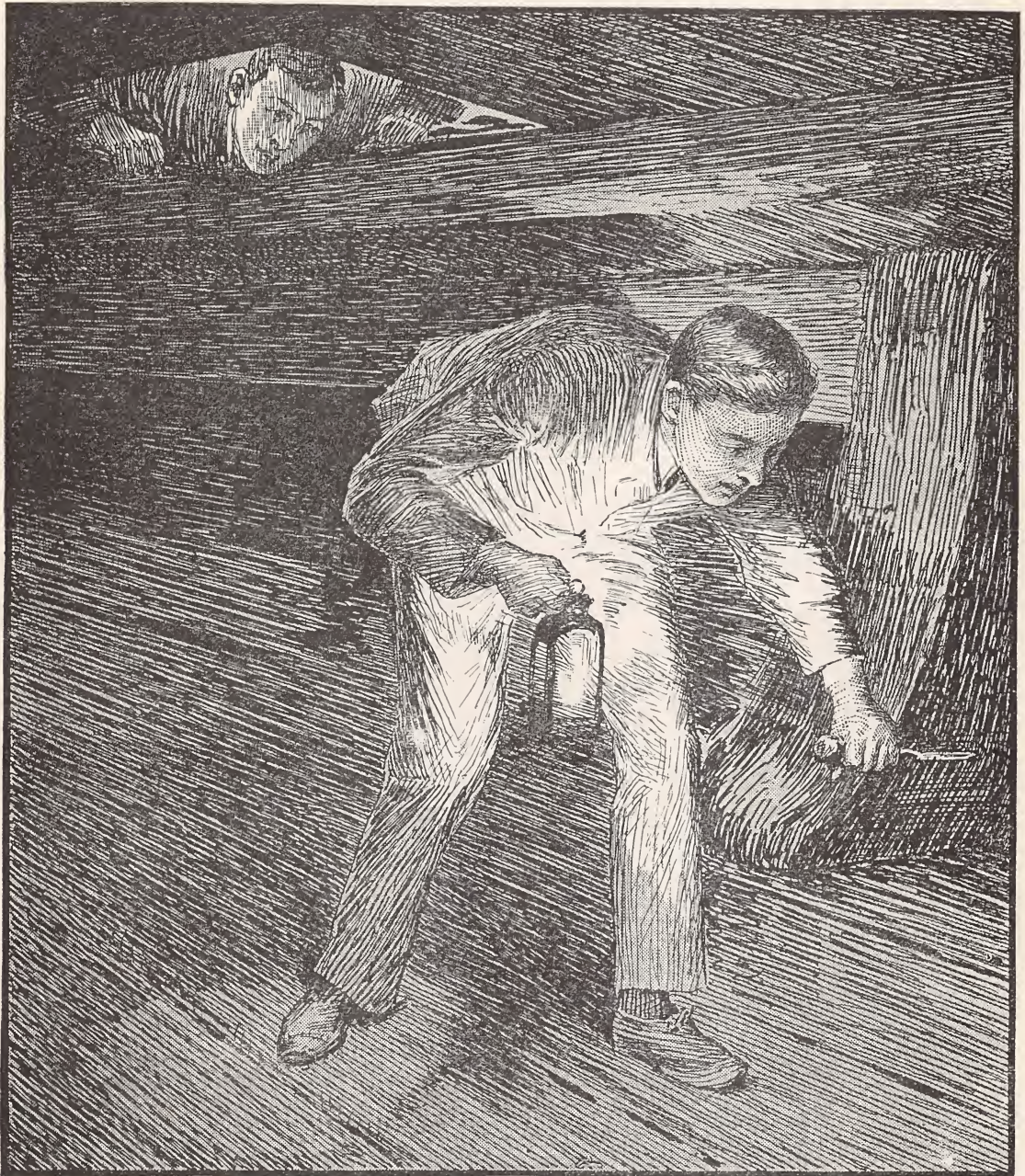
After lunch it was so hot that the boys were glad to sit beneath the awning on the upper deck or platform over the cabins. Selim brought them an orange each which they enjoyed as they had never enjoyed oranges before. Needless to say Selim had one left for himself tucked in the fold of his sash. It was not the smallest of the three.

The two young officers had taken refuge beneath the awning, luxuriating in deck-chairs. It was not long before they were in conversation with the two boys. Lieutenant Maitland affirmed that the best way for an Englishman to stand the heat of Egypt was to keep himself thoroughly fit, and the best way to secure this end was 'an hour with the gloves every morning.' The upshot of it was that the young officer promised to give Dick and Harry a lesson in boxing every morning, and as there was a difficulty in finding any retired place on the boat, they would have to content themselves with waiting till the breakfast was cleared away in the saloon and having a turn-to there. This was an offer that pleased Dick mightily.

(Continued on page 58.)



"Selim swaggered up in a new crimson fez."



"Dick began a tour of inspection."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 55.)

WHEN the officers had gone Dick turned to Harry and said, 'Did you do what I said at lunch?'

Harry, by way of reply, began slowly to turn out his pockets and produced a slice of pressed beef between two pieces of bread. Dick's pockets yielded six biscuits and a chunk of cheese.

'That's all right, so far,' he said, wrapping the spoil in a clean pocket-handkerchief. 'Get a couple of bottles of lemonade and he will do. Poor old chap is peckish by this time, I expect. Now, I have had a good look round, and I find I could get that cover off the hatch—the iron bar lifts out of a slot and is not fastened down. If I got the bar on each side out and removed the tarpaulin, I should be able to take one of the boards off the hatch and pop down.'

'Not without being seen,' said Harry. 'It would be the taking off the tarpaulin that would show.'

'Not at night,' suggested Dick.

Harry thought there would surely be some one on watch at night, and removing the heavy tarpaulin would make such a fuss. Dick grunted as he heard his own secret doubts expressed by Harry.

'There's another plan,' he continued, slowly. 'I told you that when I was down below, and old Omar nearly frightened the life out of me, I rolled up against the butt of the stern-mast. Well, there's the mast, and it runs through the deck down below.'

Harry nodded, and Dick went on, pointing with his finger as he spoke: 'There's the mast, and the corner where the barrels stand. Where he was hidden is there—under the first right-hand-side cabin. I measured it out by pacing, as best I could, this morning: and that's your cabin.'

Harry looked his astonishment, and Dick continued, 'That's your cabin. I looked mine over this morning, and if yours is like it, we can prise up a board in the flooring, and let the things down into his very mouth, so to speak.' He looked at Harry in triumph.

'Let's come and see,' said Harry, after a long admiring pause.

The boys adjourned straightway to examine Harry's cabin, and found that the floor was similar to that of Dick's—the boards were short, running transversely, and not in long continuous planks like those of the deck.

'A screw-driver or chisel, and we can do it all right,' exclaimed Dick, rubbing his hands. 'But what bothers me is this: Does the roof of the hold run right up to this floor, or is there a space below and another set of planking? Let me see, now—I went down the well of the hold, and turned to the left through a kind of passage which was very low indeed, then the hold seemed to open out again, and became more lofty. Yes, I think this floor is the actual roof of the hold. You see, this is almost a flat-bottomed craft, and there can't be much space—in height, I mean. We won't start on it now, there are too many people about. We must wait till after dinner. We shall be tired, and turn in early. The darkies will be clearing up the

dinner things and making a clatter, and if we make a noise they won't hear. You bring a chisel and a long piece of cord out of the felucca, and don't forget the two bottles of lemonade.'

The boys went on deck till dinner-time, and looked at the flat banks of the river as they glided by. They passed several small towns and villages, each with its white mosque, its groups of palms, and clusters of houses dilapidated in appearance, and little better than huts. They saw the peasants—the fellaheen—at work in the fields of corn and indigo, and Uncle Charlie pointed out the shadoof, a primitive construction for raising water from the river, and the curious water-wheels; and the Professor explained what the British administration was doing for the country by introducing a scientific system of irrigation.

As the sun went down the crew knelt on the deck with their faces toward Mecca, the palms of their hands outstretched, then bowed their heads till their foreheads touched the deck. Down on his knees went the Reis, like any of his men. The Arab Sheikh also, in his embroidered garments and fine linen, removed the shoes from his feet, and knelt on the deck in prayer.

The boys observed this scene from a respectful distance. Selim, who stood beside them, said with a snigger, 'Moslems say their prayers. Selim a Christian. Selim says his prayers in bed.'

Dick turned on him with a frown, exclaiming, 'Selim, you're a cad, that's what you are—say your prayers in bed! That's not a Christian way of saying prayers. That's a sneaky way.'

As arranged, the boys were tired that night, and turned in early. Harry went whistling into his cabin. Dick slammed the door of his, then slid into Harry's. The bolt was slipped, and Dick took stock of the preparations.

'Grub? Yes. Lemonade? Yes. Cord? Right. Chisel? Right. Every one is listening to the singing in the fore part of the boat. Prepare the decks for action.'

The strip of carpet was rolled up, and the boys set to work. There was sufficient light for their purpose from the opening above the cabin door. A board at the foot of the bunk was levered up with little difficulty and no noise, and it appeared that their undertaking would be a simple one.

Dick put his face to the opening, and in a penetrating whisper called 'Omar, Omar. Kebabs.' He had learned the latter word from Selim. He did not know exactly what it meant, but he knew it was some sort of food, and thought it would answer the purpose. He bent his ear and listened. There was no answer. He tried it again, but with no result.

'We're done,' whispered Harry. 'There must be another tier of flooring underneath, as you said.'

Dick sat back on his heels and grunted, but he was not the sort of lad to give in without a struggle. 'If old Omar were just underneath,' he said, 'he would see the light through this hole, and would be on the look-out. Give me your camera tripod, Harry.'

He thrust this instrument down the hole, and poked about for some moments. 'Right you are, Harry,' he whispered. 'It's only three or four feet deep. I'm going down. We've got up one board, we can get up two, and if I can't squeeze through them we will take up three. It seems all quiet outside, doesn't it?'

Harry listened at the cabin door, and nodded his head. In a moment another board was up. Dick squeezed himself through the aperture and dropped. 'It's precious dark here,' he whispered from below. 'Have you got anything in the shape of a light you can give me?'

Harry considered a moment. 'There's my developing lamp. Will that do?'

The ruby lamp was lit and passed below, and Dick began a tour of inspection.

Steps that Harry knew well were now approaching the cabin door, and he hastily replaced the boards and flung the carpet over. Uncle Charlie's voice was heard without. 'Open the door, Harry. Have you turned in? Open the door. You are losing all the fun.'

Harry slipped his night-shirt over his clothes, and opened the door.

'You sleepy young rascal,' cried the professor, who appeared to be in high good-humour. 'You should come on deck and see the moon—such a moon as we don't see in England. We have had quite a concert forward. The boatmen have been singing and accompanying themselves on their queer instruments; and one of the young officers has favoured us with some Scotch songs. Listen! they're at it again. Where is Dick?'

'He was here a few minutes ago,' said Harry with a yawn. The Professor went away.

'It was Uncle Charlie,' whispered Harry again at the opening. 'He's looking for you.'

'Then sharp's the word,' said Dick. 'Old Omar is down there right enough. The boards are loose, and I have got one off. Give me the victuals and the cord. Right! Now the bottles.'

Harry thrust his head and shoulders into the hole, and saw the ruby light flickering, and heard Dick's voice.

'Omar, Omar! Here you are, old chap. Catch hold. Kebabs, you know. Kebabs.'

In a few moments he was back again in Harry's cabin, covered with dust, and a smear of tar on his nose, but beaming with triumph. The boards were replaced, and in ten minutes both bunks were occupied by profound sleepers, who chuckled in their sleep.

(Continued on page 70.)

GUARDING THE TRENCHES.

'YOU'LL take care of the children, Bully, won't you?' said old Mrs. Trench one bright, sunny morning, as the four young people made their way down the gravel path towards the sea-shore, the bulldog following on behind.

Bully wagged his short, stubby tail as much as to say 'I'll take care of them right enough.' After this, he trotted on in front to the sea.

The Trench children were staying with Grannie, who lived at Silverbeach, and a right royal time they were having. Within ten minutes they had reached a lonely part of the shore, where the incoming tide was rapidly filling up the nooks and corners. Here they amused themselves to their hearts' content.

'Let's play soldiers,' said Bobby, toy-rifle in hand. 'Old Bully and I will guard the trenches, and you two chaps'—here addressing his brothers—'can do a bit of scouting.'

'Oh, no!' cried Betty, opening her eyes rather wide. 'Please don't play at soldiers; let's have a game about princesses and castles, and things like that!'

Betty's words, however, met with good-natured scorn, and seeing her brothers were bent on 'soldiering,' she decided to join in and make the best of it.

Bully privately thought the guarding of trenches rather slow work, and was not at all sorry when, after about half an hour had passed by, the youngsters decided on a change of amusement.

'What do you say,' said Bobby, ever the leader, 'to a ramble along by the cliffs? There are some jolly high ones half a mile further on.'

'Just the very thing,' replied Betty, who was getting rather tired of being Hospital Nurse; and so said Claude and Rupert.

Bully, relieved from keeping guard, also fully approved and the little party forthwith made their way along the shore, until they reached a part of the cliffs known as Rocky Head. Here, Bobby, in search of adventure, suggested an upward climb. Again his brothers and sister, agreed—not so Bully, however! But his opinion was not asked. For about ten yards, one behind another, they journeyed upwards. Then Bully decided to 'strike.'

'I'm not going to climb that cliff for any one,' he growled in doggy language, and neither shall those children. They are in my charge, and I'll let them know it, too.' With this he seized hold of Betty's skirt and gave it a tug.

'Let go,' cried Betty, 'you stupid old Bully, you'll tear my frock! Bobby—Rupert—somebody please call him off!'

The boys called, but in vain: Bully absolutely refused to loosen his hold. Betty began to grow frightened.

'Let go, Bully, you brute!' shouted Bobby, holding his rifle threateningly over the animal's head. Bully's feelings were hurt. Brute, indeed, when he was only doing his duty!

'Perhaps he doesn't want us to go this way,' gasped Betty at last. Let's take a proper path—there's sure to be one further on.'

After some time of arguing, Bully all the while gripping hold of her skirt, the boys decided to act on her suggestion, and Bully almost immediately became as mild and gentle as a lamb, trotting along by Betty's side as though nothing had occurred. Scarcely had they gone a dozen yards, when a loud startling crash fell on their ears, and looking in the direction whence the sound came, the children saw that a huge piece of the cliff (loosened by recent heavy rains) had fallen just on the very spot where they had stood a short while previously.

Surely it was no mere chance, but an over-ruling Providence, which had caused Bully to act as he had done!

Betty turned quite white as she realised what had happened.

'Oh, boys,' she cried, 'just see! If it hadn't been for Bully, we might all have been killed!'

'Sorry, old chap,' said Bobby to Bully, when later on the young people were making their way homewards in somewhat subdued fashion. 'I'll never call you a brute again.'

Bully took the apology with gracious dignity, feeling very well pleased with himself, as indeed he might be, for had he not, in more senses than one that morning, been 'guarding the Trenches'?

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.



“ ‘Old Bully and I will guard the trenches.’ ”



AN IMPUDENT RIVAL



“He lurched forward, and tried to drag Eve after him.”

THE ESCAPE OF EVE.

‘**W**HATEVER are you doing?’

Denis had flung the playroom door wide open, and he stood on the threshold and stared at his sister in wide-eyed amazement.

‘Hush! Do come in, and shut the door,’ begged Eve in an anxious whisper. ‘I will tell you in a minute, when I have got this thing on.’

She was fastening a trailing black silk skirt round her waist, with the help of many safety pins, and when

at last the two ends were made to meet over her holland frock, she turned to her brother with a triumphant face.

'I'm scoring off Miss Watts—that's all,' she said, defiantly. 'She came in half an hour ago and told me my French exercise was so careless this morning that I was to stay in and write it out again this afternoon, instead of bathing with you. That's the second time she has kept me in this week, and I *won't* stand it! It's bad enough to have a holiday governess, anyhow, but—'

'But why are you dressing up like that?' interrupted Denis, as he watched her pinning a wonderful erection of blue straw and black bows on to her head.

'Because I'm *not* going to stay in and write the exercise; I'm going to bathe,' returned Eve, decidedly. 'Miss Watts has gone over to Cornford for the afternoon, but Nurse knows I am kept in, and she has taken the babies for a walk by the sea. If I went down in my ordinary clothes she would be certain to catch sight of me, but she will never recognise me dressed up like this. Oh, isn't it fun!' she cried excitedly, as she surveyed herself in the looking-glass. 'Don't I look grown up and old? They're Miss Watts' clothes—I found them in her wardrobe. I'm going to start now, Denis, so I shall be at the bathing-cove at three. You had better follow on your bicycle, and don't be late!'

Half an hour later the two were racing across the little stretch of sand to the sea, then, plunging laughingly into the water, they began enjoying the bathe in the sunshine to their hearts' content. As there was no Miss Watts to tell them when they had been in long enough, Eve forgot all about the time, and it was not till a sudden chilled feeling came over her that she called to Denis, 'I'm going in.'

She ran over the beach to the rocks where she had left her clothes, and Denis turned back for a final swim, then waded through the shallow water to the shore. He was starting to run across the sands to where his clothes were hidden, when Eve's scarlet-clad, dripping little figure reappeared, and came racing towards him.

Her face was blue with cold, and her teeth chattered as she called to him. 'My clothes have gone! They must have been stolen. I left them behind that big black rock, and there is not a sign of them left! Oh, Denis, what *shall* I do? They were all Miss Watts' things!'

Denis stared at her in consternation. 'That man selling bananas!' he said suddenly. 'He's the only person who came past while we were bathing. He must have bagged them.' Then, as he saw Eve shaking with cold, he added hastily, 'I will get into my togs as quickly as I can, and sprint off home and fetch some clothes for you. I have got my covert coat strapped on to my bicycle, so you'd better put that on till I get back.'

It was not long before Denis had scrambled into his clothes, and was making his way across the rocks towards home.

Eve was shivering miserably, in spite of the light overcoat, and she started running about the beach to try and infuse some warmth into her body. Then suddenly she caught sight of something that made her stop dead, while her face lit up with a new hope. Far in the distance trudging along the beach with his loaded

basket was the bent form of the old banana-seller. Without stopping for a moment to think Eve took to her heels, and leaving the little cove behind her, raced like the wind across the long stretch of yellow sand. On she ran, panting and breathless, her limbs weighted with the clinging wet of her bathing-dress, until at last she reached the old man's side. 'Oh, please, do stop!' she gasped. 'And have you got my clothes, because I am so cold, and they aren't mine, and I do want them so much!'

'What are you talking about?' growled the man, shuffling along unsteadily.

'My clothes—they were on the rocks, and I thought you had taken them,' faltered Eve.

The old tramp turned angrily towards her, and she shrank back nervously. His evil face and wild-looking eyes suddenly frightened her, and she looked vainly round the deserted beach to see if there was any sign of Denis or Nurse. Not a soul was in sight, and her heart beat unevenly as she turned to the man again.

'It's all right. I will go,' she said hastily.

But he had caught hold of her wrist. 'No, you don't!' he sneered. 'I don't let you go and spread ugly stories about me. You come along.'

He lurched unsteadily forward, and tried to drag Eve after him; but, quickly wrenching her arm away, she freed herself from his grasp. In another instant she was stumbling blindly across the shingle towards the road.

Miss Watts was riding home from Cornford by the sea, and she looked round suddenly as she heard the cry of 'Help!' In a flash she was off her bicycle, and running towards the shivering, terrified little figure.

When Dennis joined them some minutes later Eve was clasped in the kind arms, giving vent to her pent-up feelings in a passionate storm of tears. 'Goodness, Eve, what is the matter?' he exclaimed. 'And why *did* you leave the Cove? I have got your clothes, and when I was looking for you among the rocks, look what I found!'

It was Miss Watts' turn to stare. Rolled in a bundle under Denis' arm was her best silk skirt, crumpled, covered with sand, and splashed with sea-water.

'All your clothes were there!' went on Dennis. 'You must have looked in the wrong place. We had better go and find the rest.'

It was a very sorrowful little party that reached home that afternoon. Miss Watts helped Eve at once into bed, as she was still shivering with cold, and her head ached terribly; but not a word of reproach passed the governess's lips, and Eve felt so miserably ashamed of herself.

'Oh, Miss Watts, you don't know how sorry I am,' she said at last. 'I will write and tell Mother how I have spoilt your clothes, and—'

'No, no,' Miss Watts answered kindly, smoothing the straying curls from Eve's burning forehead. 'You have had your punishment, and no more need be said about it, if you promise you will never be wilfully disobedient again.'

'You are good!' exclaimed Eve, impulsively, throwing her arms round Miss Watts' neck. 'You've made me feel more ashamed of myself than I've ever done before, and I *have* been punished! It's been the most miserable afternoon I ever remember, and I shall never, never disobey you again.'

VIOLA VIVIAN.

THE WATCH.

MY busy hands go round and round.
 I mark the time with cheerful sound,
 And not one moment past me flows
 Without my whisper: 'There it goes!' I never laze the hours away;
 I never take a holiday;
 And Father Time has never said:
 'Stay! Stay, good watch! You run ahead!' Nor has he ever whispered low:
 'Come! Hurry up! You're getting slow!' Now listen, do, and bravely try
 To heed my moments ticking by;
 And understand, each sound you hear
 Is old Time's footstep passing near.

JOHN LEA.

THREE EXILES.

'I DO think it is jolly hard on one,' said Gerald, kicking the dead leaves about disconsolately. 'I hate going back to school late and getting behind with everything. It's absurd to make such a fuss over measles.'

'It's no harder for you than for me,' said Alison, who was seated on a tree-trunk looking very gloomy indeed. 'I know I should have been elected hockey-captain if I had been back at the beginning of the term. Now of course they will have chosen Annie Treves.'

There was a silence. Then Gladys, the youngest of the trio, said in a voice which shook a little, 'I wish you two wouldn't be so cross. I looked forward to coming away with you awfully, but it's not a bit nice. I wish I could have stayed at home and helped Mother to nurse the twins.'

There was another silence—rather an awkward one, for both Gerald and Alison felt ashamed of the fuss they had been making over their exile, and the mention of Mother and the poor sick twins caused them to realise suddenly that other people had more to bear than they.

A distant rumble of thunder made the children start, and gave a different turn to their thoughts.

'There!' exclaimed Alison. 'That's what made it so stuffy and horrid. We had better be going home. I wonder which is the quickest way?'

'Straight on, I should think,' said Gerald. 'Oh, I say!'—as there came another much louder rumble—'we're in for it! Come on, you two.'

They hurried down the path, Gerald leading, some little way ahead, and Gladys clinging to Alison's hand, for she was greatly afraid of thunderstorms; and when suddenly there came a vivid flash, followed quickly by a loud clap, she cried out, 'Oh, I daren't go on! We shall be struck! Oh, Alison, what shall we do?'

Here Gerald came running back towards them. 'Come on!' he shouted. 'There's a cottage here. Be quick! It's going to pour.'

He was right. Heavy drops began to fall before the children could reach the cottage. It stood on the outskirts of the wood: a very desolate-looking little place enclosed by a tumbledown fence in a piece of waste ground.

'It looks deserted,' Alison panted, as they pushed open the decrepit gate and hurried up the path. Gerald gave a vigorous rat-tat with the knocker, and almost at

the same second there came a vivid fork of lightning and a peal of thunder which sounded like a billion giant tea-trays crashing together.

Gladys could stand no more. She seized the door-handle, turned it, and burst into the cottage.

Seated in an armchair by a dismal, dirty fireplace was a little old woman. She was leaning forward eagerly as Gladys entered, but when she saw her a look of surprise and disappointment came over her wrinkled face. 'I thought it was Mary Ann,' she said. 'I made sure it was. But maybe she has sent you with a message?'

'N—no,' stammered Gladys, backing towards the door, through which her brother and sister were watching the scene.

Alison now came forward. 'I am very sorry we burst in like this,' she said. 'It was the storm. My little sister is so frightened by thunder and lightning.'

The old woman did not seem to hear. 'I made sure it was Mary Ann,' she quavered. 'Here's a week gone and she has never been near me, and my knee getting worse every day. Oh, dear! oh, dear!'

'Couldn't we do something?' Alison asked. 'Who is Mary Ann? Were you expecting her?'

'I have been expecting her every day. She is my great-niece from Wickley, and she comes to see me twice a week; and since she last was here I've had a fall and hurt my knee. It's that swollen I can hardly move about. You can see for yourselves what a mess the place is in—and me as particular as any one could be!'

The kitchen certainly did look very untidy. Unwashed dishes stood on the table, dust had gathered everywhere, and the ashes in the fireplace made the whole place look neglected.

'Look here,' whispered Gerald to Alison. 'Can't we at least light the fire? That would cheer her up. She looks pretty bad.'

'Oh, yes; let's,' said Alison; and immediately, under the old woman's direction, the three children set to work.

The girls cleared out the grate, whilst Gerald fetched coal and wood from a little outhouse. As they had often made fires for picnics they knew what to do, and with the help of the bellows soon had a cheerful blaze, to which the old woman held out her hands eagerly.

The next thing to be done was to put the kettle on and make her a cup of tea—Gladys' idea; then to wash up the dishes and tidy the kitchen—Alison's idea; and lastly Gerald suggested that they should go and find Mary Ann and a doctor to attend to the poor old woman's knee.

The children had been so busy that they had hardly heard the latter part of the storm, and now the rain had stopped and the sun was shining. The old woman, very much cheered by the tea, was full of gratitude, and begged them to return and see her the next day—which they would have done without being asked, for they felt now that she was their particular old woman.

Mary Ann they found at her home in the village close by. She was much upset at hearing of her old aunt's accident. She herself had been ill, but had hoped every day to be well enough to go to the cottage, and had meant to do so in the morning. Now, however, she decided to go at once, and to take the village doctor with her if he was at home, which he fortunately was.

(Concluded on page 66.)



“Gladys seized the door-handle, and burst into the cottage.”



“‘Look at this!’ said Gerald.”

THREE EXILES.

(Concluded from page 63.)

LIFE now began to be full of interest for the three exiled children. Every day they went to see old Mrs. Watkin and to do work for her—not housework, for Mary Ann did that, but gardening. It was Alison's idea: it had come to her after hearing Mrs. Watkin's story.

The old woman had bought the cottage and the ground with her savings and some money sent to her by her son in America. This son had intended to come home and live with his mother, and make a living for them both by gardening, but before he could start he fell ill and died. So poor Mrs. Watkin was left all alone with the cottage and ground, which had never been touched.

'Let's make a garden for her!' Alison had exclaimed. 'We will dig it all over and plant flowers and vegetables, and she can make money by selling them.'

The children had set to work eagerly, but digging proved ever so much harder than they had expected, and the piece of ground seemed to grow larger every day.

'I think I must be sickening for measles,' Gladys said one day, sitting down suddenly and dropping her spade. 'My back aches awfully, and so does my head.'

'Have a rest,' said Alison. 'Oh, do you think this will ever be done? What time is it, Gerald?' she called to her brother, who was some way off.

He was examining something he had dug up, and answered Alison by saying excitedly, 'Come here, you two!'

'Well?' said Gladys, when they were on the spot. 'It's only an old jam-pot or something.'

'It looks more like a vase,' said Alison. 'And there's another!'

'Yes, and look at this,' said Gerald, holding up a strange-looking coin. 'I tell you what—I believe these are Roman remains. You know what Cousin Henry was reading in the papers the other day about some having been found in the woods.'

Gerald was right, and old Mrs. Watkin's waste ground proved to be a regular mine of strange things that had belonged to the Romans. She was not allowed to sell them, for they were 'Treasure Trove' and belonged to the Crown; but her ground was bought from her, and she was given a nice sum of money—enough to enable her to keep a little servant and to live in comfort for the rest of her life.

'It's queer how things turn out,' said Alison, when the three children had been declared free from infection and were on the way home. 'Just think what a difference our being sent down there made to poor old Mrs. Watkin. And we were grumbling like anything about it!'

C. M. STRACHAN.

A LEGEND OF THE BIRDS.

WE have all sometimes wondered at the strength and beauty of the pinions of birds, by which they can easily mount up into the air, or, as in the case of the seagulls, wing their flight across the ocean.

A beautiful legend has been handed down concerning the birds and their wings. It says that when the birds were first created they had no wings, and that God made the wings and put them down before the birds

and said, 'Now come and take the burdens up and bear them.' So they took them up with their beaks and laid them upon their shoulders, and the wings seemed to be a heavy load and difficult to bear. But they bore their burdens patiently, and soon found that what they had once borne would now bear them. They soared up into the air with ease, and the wings gave them power to fly through the woods or mount up into the sky.

This is a parable that has a useful meaning for us all. There are many things from which we at first shrink, but which we welcome afterwards, and find they have been true friends to us. We call these things 'blessings in disguise.' The hard lesson calls out our patience and perseverance, and when we have successfully performed it, we have the satisfaction of a duty nobly done. It is not the battle easily won that the soldier is proudest of, but the victory that has been gained after hard fighting and at a great cost.

And so our duties from which we sometimes shrink, and look upon as burdens, become as pinions to us, on which we may mount to great heights of nobleness and goodness.

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

The Tale of some Famous Sieges.

II.—LIÉGE.

IN one of the most beautiful districts of Belgium, not far from the forest of the Ardennes and close to the German frontier, lies Liège, an important city and one of the principal mining and manufacturing centres of Western Europe.

For many years Belgium was at peace with all her neighbours, and her towns grew and became more and more wealthy and prosperous. Then suddenly, in the early days of August, 1914, there was a change. Europe was plunged into war, and Liège won for herself a glorious reputation and the praise and gratitude of the whole civilised world.

Perhaps never, in the whole course of history, has a city gained so great a fame in so short a space of time; but there is no need to tell that story now. We all know how Liège held at bay the invading armies of Germany, and how, by her heroism and fortitude, she saved Europe and struck the first blows in the great struggle for liberty and civilisation.

To many people, no doubt, who have passed through Belgium as tourists, Liège, with its manufactories, coal-mines, and tall smoking chimneys, has seemed merely the busy industrial centre of a prosperous and commercial country; and its swift change from peace to war, and from the ordinary things of everyday life to deeds of courage and fortitude, must have appeared well-nigh miraculous. Those, however, who had studied Belgian history knew that there was another side to the picture, for, in the past, Liège did not by any means bear a peaceable character among the cities of Western Europe.

On the contrary, the inhabitants of the town have always been noted for their recklessness, their impatience of discipline, and their hatred of any form of law and order.

Again and again the Liégeois have revolted against their rulers or plunged into warfare with neighbours,

and again and again the city has been besieged and bombarded, not only by foreign enemies, but as a punishment for obstinacy and insubordination.

There are, certainly, many dark and blood-stained pages in her history, but, whatever may have been her misdeeds in the past, Liège retrieved them all when she stood so bravely in the breach during those anxious summer days of 1914; and, lawless as they have often been, the heroism of her citizens has never been called in question. There seems to be, indeed, a glamour of romance round the very name of the city now, and as we search the old records and read one thrilling story after another of battles and rebellions, of hideous massacres, cruel humiliations, and gallant struggles against hopeless odds, we feel more inclined to pity and to admire than to condemn.

The principality of Liège was for many centuries a small province governed by Prince-Bishops, and it was not, like the other divisions of Belgium, included in the Burgundian Union. Indeed, it existed as a separate state for more than a thousand years—from the tenth century, when it was founded, until the time of the French Revolution.

In spite of its partial independence, however, the Dukes of Burgundy claimed supremacy over the little province, and there were many desperate revolts against this dominion.

One great rebellion took place in 1464, and Charles the Bold, who was then Duke of Burgundy, swore that he would bring the turbulent citizens to their senses 'By whip and by stick.'

The threat was quickly put into execution; Liège was captured, and the principal inhabitants were ordered to bring the keys of the city to Charles, walking to his camp outside the town, bareheaded and with bare feet.

This punishment and humiliation did not have a lasting effect on the rebellious principality, and three years later we find Liège once more in open revolt.

On this second occasion Charles determined that he would punish the city ruthlessly and put an end to the trouble once and for all. He forced the French king, Louis XI., who had previously encouraged the rebels, to unite with him in their punishment, and thus the armies of France and of Burgundy marched together against the city and besieged it. Among the troops were some companies of Scottish archers.

The men of Liège defended themselves bravely, and several times sallied out of the town to attack the enemy, their leader being a man called Vilde, or Sauvage, who is believed really to have been an Englishman named Wild.

On the last day of the siege a new plan was made by the citizen-soldiers, and this very nearly proved successful. The plot was that the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy should be killed or kidnapped, and with this intention a band of desperate men issued out from the shattered walls of the town, at midnight, and made their way to the Royal headquarters.

The attack took the enemy by surprise, and there was terrible confusion in the camp, but the Scottish archers and the Burgundian guards stood firm, and in the end the reckless adventurers were driven back into the city.

The next morning Liège was stormed again and captured after furious fighting. This time it was the defenders of the city who were taken by surprise, for,

as it was Sunday morning, they had considered themselves safe from attack, and were amazed when the enemy troops swarmed into the streets through the breaches in the walls.

Numbers of the inhabitants of the town were killed during the first onslaught, while others managed to escape into the dense forest of the Ardennes, near at hand.

The victors held a great thanksgiving service in the Cathedral after this success, and then Charles consulted the King of France as to how he should punish and subdue the rebellious city.

'Who wants to drive off the birds must first destroy the nest,' said Louis, and, acting upon this advice, the Duke of Burgundy ordered that the whole place should be given over to pillage and slaughter.

Terrible scenes followed this ruthless decree, and we read of buildings being burnt, property stolen and destroyed, and men and women massacred. It is said that no fewer than forty thousand perished, many of them being drowned in the river Meuse.

Charles did not destroy the convents and churches of the city, and later, when the Pope protested against the fearful bloodshed that had taken place, he seems to have shown some remorse for his cruelty.

During the great struggle for independence in the sixteenth century, Liège escaped the sufferings which were inflicted on other cities in the Low Countries, but her turn came in the next two centuries, when she was besieged and bombarded again and again by hostile armies.

The Duke of Marlborough captured the town in 1702 and stormed the strong citadel which was held by the French. Historians give us graphic accounts of what took place.

The bombardment began on the morning of October 20th and lasted day and night until the afternoon of the 23rd. The fire of the French was 'prodigious,' a writer of the time tells us, but that made by the allied British and Dutch artillery was even greater. At last after desperate fighting, in which the Dutch especially distinguished themselves, the citadel was taken.

There is a picturesque account of the attack in an old poem, written by a soldier who was present. He says that:

'Our cannon-ball beat down the wall

And made great loops therein.

With bombs and grenades we sent our tokens

Which made great noise and din.'

The Allies treated their enemies with courtesy and consideration on this occasion, and although many lives were lost, the greater part of the French garrison, with the Governor of the fortress, were taken prisoners.

During the wars of the French Revolution and of Napoleon Bonaparte, Liège changed hands several times, and it was captured in turn by French, Russian, and Austrian troops. The last adventure was in 1814, when the Allies took possession of the town and citadel, and then for exactly a hundred years—a longer period than ever before in her troubled history—the turbulent old city was at peace, with leisure to cultivate her industries and to increase her wealth—which she did to good purpose, becoming one of the first iron-working cities of the world.

However, in spite of the long respite, and in spite, too, of her settled and prosperous aspect, the days of



“The principal inhabitants were ordered to bring the keys of the city to Charles.”

warfare were not over for Liège, and, when the time of trial came, she was found ready and willing to take her place in the forefront, and to fight bravely in the

greatest conflict that the world has ever seen. The name of her heroic General, Leman, will live for ever in the tale of great sieges.



DOBBIN'S VISITOR.

DOBBIN'S VISITOR.

'TAP-TAP, tap-tap,' at my window-pane,
'Tap-tap, tap-tap,' I hear it again!
Then out of bed, still half asleep,

I creep—
And peep—

And there, on the window-sill, hungry and bold,
Stands a poor little robin, half-frozen with cold.

'The north wind is blowing, and I am so chill,
And if you don't feel me, I'm sure to be ill;
Won't you throw me some breadcrumbs and, just
for a treat,
Spare a little fresh suet, chopped up with some
meat?'

'The weather's so wintry, the snow is so deep,
The nights are so cold, and I've nowhere to sleep;
Do you think, that before you get tucked into bed,
You could manage to open the door of the shed?'

'Creak-creak, creak-creak,' groans the old shed door,
'Crunch-crunch, crunch-crunch,' cry stones on the
floor,

As out of bed, still half asleep,

I creep—
To peep—

And there, huddled up in the hay, soft and warm,
Sleeps a dear little robin, away from all harm.

LILIAN HOLMES.

WHEN DO YOU THINK?

AN amusing story has been told concerning Robert Southey, the great English writer and Poet Laureate. Perhaps he was the most industrious man of letters that England has ever produced. During a long life he maintained himself and his family by an honourable and never-failing industry.

One day a friend of the poet came to see him, and asked him how he spent the days. 'In the morning,' replied Southey, 'I write history. The afternoon I spend in writing Poetry, and in the evening I employ the time in writing on Philosophy.'

A smile came over the features of his friend, and he replied, 'But when do you *think*?'

Industry is a good thing, and genius has been described as 'an infinite capacity for taking pains.' But if a man wants to exercise an influence over the minds of other men, he must sometimes allow himself time to think.

FRANK ELLIS.

HIDDEN TREASURE.

THERE'S not a single, single leaf upon our apple-tree;

It looks so sad and lonely, and as shabby as can be:
Its trunk is wet and grey, and its boughs are black
and bare,

And yet it is a treasure-house, and things are hiding
there;

Each tiny, tiny twiglet is a fair enchanted room
Which holds within its keeping bales of silken apple-
bloom.

I wish I were a fairy from the hills of blue beyond:
I'd stand beneath the branches, and would wave my
magic wand,

Until some bough would tremble, and some door would
open wide,
And in one weeny second I'd be snugly shut inside;
Then I should learn the secrets of our sly old apple-tree,
And Diddy would be so surprised when he came home
to tea.

The sunbeams and the raindrops have a key to every
room,

For they are little helpers in the weaving of the bloom.
I've tried to catch a sunbeam, and to ask him for his key,
And listened to the raindrops pitter-pattering on the
tree!

I cannot catch a sunbeam, and the raindrops will not
tell—

The secrets of the apple-tree are guarded far too well.

But in the spring it shows again its lovely blossom-
store,

And strews its pinky petals on the grassy garden floor;
Its leafy summer ceiling gives me shelter from the heat,
And oh! its autumn apples are so rosy and so sweet;
I know for very certain it's a kindly apple-tree,
Although it keeps its secrets safely hid from little me.

EILEEN CARFRAE.

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINY.

(Continued from page 59.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE boys found plenty to occupy their minds on board the *Isis*. Harry could get nothing for his collection, it is true—nothing but mosquitoes, and those he did not want, but strangely enough they seemed to want him. Perhaps they also were making a collection, and a sample from a British boy was a welcome addition. He hoped for better things when they should land.

The continual scheming to supply the wants of the dervish, and get the provisions delivered to him in safety, was a business in itself. It might have been noticed at dinner-time, had not every one been particularly busy on his own account, how the boys' appetites had improved in spite of the intense heat.

Two helpings was the rule, at any rate in such things as were portable and not too sticky. Fortunately the Professor sat the same side of the table, and the Sheikh was between him and the boys, or he might have noticed how quickly they got through their food, and have treated them to a lecture on the evils of 'bolting,' and the necessity of thirty-two distinct movements of the under-jaw in the process of mastication.

On the morning of the third day they were seated on the upper deck beneath the awning resting, and feeling that they deserved a rest; for they had taken their hour with the gloves, and had come off to their credit. Dick had a somewhat awkward graze on the hipbone, but that had not come from contact with the gloves, but from the corner of the saloon table, and was a matter of small consequence, simply demonstrating that the conveniences of life are often very inconvenient. Selim again brought them oranges and a banana each.

'I wonder where Selim gets these oranges,' said Harry. 'He didn't bring any on board. He had some sugar-canes, but I don't think he brought anything else. Perhaps the cook gives them to him.'

Now, Selim spent most of his time forward with the crew, and made himself generally useful; but he had more particularly attached himself to the cook: he was something of a cook himself, in point of fact it was one of his qualifications for the Professor's expedition, and when they should arrive at their destination he would be cook and housekeeper, superintendent of the commissariat department, and water-finder. So was it in the bond. Probably it was a strong professional feeling that drew him to the galley, and led him to wait on the cook with such disinterestedness.

'I have my doubts of that young gentleman,' said Dick, turning to Harry. 'Last evening, when we were slipping off to your cabin, I saw his legs disappear under the tarpaulin that covers the pile of crates amidship; we had sufficient on our hands at the time, so I did not stop to investigate. I shall keep my eye on that young man: I have taken his education on my hands, and I shall do my duty.'

That very afternoon Dick resumed the topic. 'It's a fact, Harry,' he said. 'Selim has been at it. I caught my foot in the tarpaulin just now, and the end of it came off—the end of the tarpaulin, I mean. There's boxes of oranges underneath, and other fruit and things. One of them has been tampered with. I could see where he put his hand in. I'm going to give Master Selim a lesson which he won't forget. Have you seen such a thing as a rat-trap anywhere about? I noticed one yesterday, but I can't remember where.'

The rat-trap was found after a search, and Dick examined it carefully, and tried two or three times how it worked on a piece of stick. He nodded his head with satisfaction, saying, 'That will do fine! It won't hurt him too much.'

'I have told Lieutenant Maitland about it,' continued Dick, 'and he's going to help me. When it gets dusk we're going to slip this down inside the box where Selim puts his hand and arm, and see what happens.'

Sure enough that evening, Lieutenant Maitland, who had been sitting on that very tarpaulin dreamily smoking, seemed to become interested in something that was bulging and wriggling under it, and after a while, when two long legs appeared, and a boy arose dusting his knees with his hands, the Lieutenant walked away.

The sun had set, but as the favourable breeze still held, the dahabeeyah, instead of mooring for the night in some well-chosen place as was usual, was gently keeping on her course to make the most of it. The crew had finished their devotions, and, squatting in a circle at the bows, partook of their evening meal. The Professor and the Sheikh stood aft, beside the rail of the ladder which led to the upper deck, in desultory conversation. Dick and Harry and the two officers leaned over the side near them in silence. The stars were peeping out in the clear sky; there was no sound on deck but the gentle splash of water at the boat's prow, and the faint sound of the Professor's voice.

Suddenly the pensive hush of the calm evening was split by a horrid yell from amidships. The crew, as one man, rushed from the bowl of rice they had been sharing; the Reis came darting from the helm; the Professor gave a violent start, that nearly shook off his

helmet; and the Arab, who did not look a nervous man, clapped his hand on his pistols. All rushed to the one spot. There, with his arm thrust beneath the tarpaulin, lay Selim, his face working convulsively. 'A wild beast!' he shrieked. 'Help! help! Him got his teeth in me!'

The tarpaulin was hastily plucked off, and Selim's hand and arm were seen thrust into the orange-box; but there they were fixed, and could not be extricated, either by Selim's struggles or the assistance of the sympathetic crew.

'Let me try,' said Lieutenant Maitland, and he tore off the frail boards of the orange-box and drew out Selim's hand; but what was the savage little animal that still hung to his fingers and would not be shaken off?—a rat-trap! A half-comprehending grin stole over the faces of the onlookers, and Selim gazed helplessly at his imprisoned fingers and the mysterious trap.

'What have you been doing, Selim!' the Professor said sternly.

'He a thief; he steal; he black thief!' exclaimed the Reis, and, his English failing him, he discharged a stream of turbulent Arabic at the culprit. His language and gestures were fierce, but there was a decided twinkle in his eye. There was more than a twinkle in the eyes of the crew, who evidently enjoyed the situation thoroughly.

'Yes, he's a thief,' said Uncle Charlie, as an orange rolled out of Selim's sash. The Professor retained his threatening appearance: he was desirous that Selim should receive a lesson that would be lasting in its effects. 'What's to be done with him? How do you punish a thief, Captain? You're the master of this boat.'

'Let's try him by court-martial,' said Lieutenant Maitland; and a smile spread over the faces of those present at this suggestion.

'Let him have a fair trial. Here, boys, come, we will try him. You two darkies, hold the prisoner and see that he doesn't escape.'

The hint was enough for the two boys, and the darkies gathered sufficient of what was going forward to enter into the fun, and the Reis grinned behind the hand that stroked his moustache. They brought an armchair and a small table from the saloon, and planted them in the middle of the deck. Lieutenant Maitland took the chair, and presided at the court-martial.

The President coughed behind his hand, as an intimation that the Court was now sitting. 'Bring the prisoner forward!' he cried in commanding tones.

The unresisting, downcast prisoner was led up to the table by the darkies, under the direction of Lieutenant Stoddart.

The President looked fierce, and said, 'What's the prisoner charged with?'

Lieutenant Stoddart stepped forward and saluted. 'He's charged with breaking into the store of the ship *Isis*, trading between Cairo and Wady Halfa, and with stealing sundry articles of merchandise.'

'Call the witnesses!' thundered the President.

After much nudging from Lieutenant Stoddart, the Reis came forward, and, with prompting from the same source, said, 'I Reis of dahabeeyah *Isis*—plenty things aboard—plenty orange, plenty banana. He great big little thief!'

(Continued on page 78.)



“‘He great big little tief!’”



“‘I think I have sprained my ankle,’ replied Humphrey.”

THE PAPER-CHASE.

IT'S all Ronald's fault,' grumbled Humphrey, kicking savagely at the border of turf that edged the gravel path. 'If he hadn't sneaked, old Ashworth would never have known about my exercise.'

'I believe he did it on purpose,' said Stella hotly, 'simply because he wanted to be here in the paper-chase this afternoon instead of you. I met Herbert Mosse just now, and he told me that Ronald was taking your place.'

Humphrey's attention suddenly wandered from the turf at his feet, and in the moment's pause that followed his sister's remark he stood quite still staring across the meadows with the light of a new idea in his eyes. Then at last he found his voice.

'Well, I will jolly well pay him out!' he said angrily. 'I know all about the paper-chase—when they're starting and everything, and I shall go too.'

'But you *can't*!' gasped Stella in amazement. 'Even if you get out of doing your extra work, they will all know you've been stopped, and—'

'You don't see what I mean,' interrupted Humphrey. 'I'm not going with them. I'm going by myself, and I shall take a bag of paper and lay a fresh trail to put them off the scent. Ronald will feel a pretty good idiot when he gets home and finds they've all been following a wrong track! It will jolly well take him down a peg!'

'But—but where will you start?' asked Stella, in a tone of half-awed admiration.

'I shall cut in at Turnham Corner. I shall wait there till I see which turning Ronald takes at the cross-roads; then I shall start off in the opposite direction. Stella, it's a ripping idea!' He took a step forward, and his eyes shone with the excitement of anticipation. 'Let's go and get that bundle of old exercise-books that Mademoiselle told us to throw away. We shall soon tear them up, and they will be just the thing for the paper-chase.'

He picked up his hat, and began running along the path towards the house, and Stella, after watching him for a minute in silence, took to her heels and followed in his wake.

The clock in Turnham Church tower had struck the half-hour after two when Humphrey, crouching in ambush, spied the tall slight figure of Ronald coming along the road towards him. In a few moments he had passed and vanished out of sight at the cross-roads, and in a flash Humphrey darted into the road, and followed the thin intermittent trail of paper for some yards along the turning that Ronald had taken. Then in an instant he fell on to his knees, and with his arm swept up the first handful of paper, cramming it into his own loaded bag. In three places he repeated this performance, so that from the cross-roads no trail could be seen; then, taking to his heels, he sped like lightning along the opposite road, scattering the paper unsparingly as he ran. His heart beat fast with exultation, and his feet seemed to have taken to themselves wings. The plan was working out even better than he had dared to hope, and a smile of keen satisfaction played on his face as he thought of the way in which he was triumphing over Ronald, and of how completely the enemy was being fooled.

After a mile of steady running along the high road, Humphrey turned aside, and breaking through a gap in

the hedge, made his way rather stumbingly across a waste of grassy meadow. He had clambered at an uneven pace up the side of a hill, and had started running swiftly again, when suddenly he caught his foot in a hole hidden beneath the grass, and with a sharp cry fell heavily to the ground. For a moment he lay quite still, half dazed by the pain in his ankle; then slowly he raised himself to a sitting position, and pulled feverishly at the lace of his canvas shoe. At last it came undone, and it was a slight relief to free his foot from the pressure; but the throbbing pain grew no less, and Humphrey leaned back with eyes half shut, wondering feverishly how long he would have to wait before the party of 'hounds' found him. At any minute they might come in sight, he reflected, and he felt in too much pain either to think or to care about their discovering his escapade.

The minutes dragged slowly by, and gradually lengthened themselves into an hour, and still no sight of any human being came to relieve his suspense. 'What *could* have happened?' Humphrey asked himself over and over again. Was it possible that they had somehow discovered that his trail was a false one, and found their way on to Ronald's after all? If so, he might be left lying there for hours, and the very thought of such a possibility made his heart sick within him. The pain in his swollen ankle was acute, and he shivered all over with the intense cold, which increased as dusk began to fall. Once he tried to crawl to his feet, and limp over the uneven grass-land, but the pain was so severe that he almost cried aloud as he sank to the ground again.

Another hour had dragged slowly by, and the hill-side was half veiled in darkness, when a distant shout made Humphrey raise himself on his elbow and peer searchingly through the gloom.

'Here!' he shrieked at the top of his voice, and then his heart gave a leap of joy, for a tiny flickering light had appeared in the distance, and gradually it was moving towards him. A minute later there was the sound of running footsteps on the turf, and Ronald's voice came in breathless gasps.

'I say—are you hurt?'

'I'm afraid I can't walk,' replied Humphrey, faintly. 'I think I have sprained my ankle.'

Ronald looked from the white, strained face at his feet into the gathering darkness around; then he held his arms towards the boy. 'You must climb on to my back, and I will carry you to the road,' he said. 'I can easily get you as far as the doctor's house at the corner.'

As he was very soon to discover, this was a good deal more easily said than done. Humphrey was no light weight, and the elder boy, though taller, was slightly made, and found the burden almost more than he could manage. Valiantly he stumbled on through the darkness, and for some minutes neither boy spoke. Then Humphrey's voice came rather jerkily:

'How was it that you came to look for me? It was jolly decent of you.'

'I got home about half an hour before the others,' replied Ronald, rather breathlessly. 'They told me they had gone off on a false trail at Turnham Corner, and they ran on for a long way before they found out.'

'How *did* they find out?' interrupted Humphrey.

'By the paper. All mine was torn-up newspapers and printed things, and they suddenly noticed that this was different. So they turned back and got on to the

right track again, but of course it delayed them hopelessly.'

'But how did you know it was me?' put in Humphrey, after a moment's uncomfortable pause.

'Well, I met old Ashworth on my way home, and he told me to call in and tell you to take that extra work round to him this evening. Of course you weren't there, and then—somehow it suddenly occurred to me that you might have laid the other trail, and I made Stella own up about it. We knew something must have happened, as you hadn't got back, so I decided to come. You see it was so important, because of the work and everything.'

'And you came—even after you knew that I had done such a caddish thing to you!' Humphrey gasped; and the pain in his mind hurt him more at that moment than the throbbing of the swollen ankle.

'Oh, well, I was jolly glad to be able to do you a decent turn,' replied Ronald, rather awkwardly. 'You must have thought it so sneaky of me to tell old Ashworth about that French exercise, but the fact was I had to. He asked me if I knew whose it was.'

There was a moment's pause, then Humphrey's voice came very humbly: 'You are a sportsman, Ronald. You have made me feel a rotter,' he said.

VIOLA VIVIAN.

THE SONG OF THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS.

PUFF! puff! rattle and bang,
Off I go with a noisy clang!
I roar through the valley and over the hill,
Round by the lake and the old ruined mill;
Through darksome tunnels and meadows fair,
On and on through the clear night air.
King of the rails, as faster I fly,
Ghostly hedges and trees flash by.
Onward I rush, speeding along,
Joyfully singing my Railway Song.
Slower . . . the end of my journey has come.
The lights of the station shine clear through the gloom.
Puff! puff! with a hollow clang
Dies the last sound of the song I sang.

MIRIAM E. SHILLITO.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

3.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A glorious shrub, world-famed and ever green;
A mantle-trimming, fit for king or queen;
A curious edible, in autumn found;
A place where starch and cornflour most abound;
A sentiment, idea, fancy, thought;—
The whole, a fragrant fruit, quite cheaply bought.

(Answer on page 107.) C. J. B.

ANSWER TO ARITHMOGRAPH ON PAGE 34.

Contemplation.

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Planet. | 4. Motion. | 7. Ample. |
| 2. Notice. | 5. Name. | 8. Plot. |
| 3. Calm. | 6. Tame. | |

A TOWN WHERE ONCE WILD ROSES BLOOMED.

WE sometimes hear about the wilderness being made to blossom like the rose, and of deserts being turned into gardens, but we do not often hear of rose gardens being turned into busy, populous towns.

Yet this is what actually happened during the lifetime of an English statesman who died not many years since. There is a town in Lancashire, of some thousands of inhabitants, called Bootle. Speaking in St. George's Hall, Liverpool, in 1892, Mr. Gladstone used the following words:—'Bootle I remember as a wilderness of sandhills. I have seen wild roses growing upon what is now the very centre of the borough.'

And as towns have sometimes grown up where once gardens bloomed, so left to themselves they would in many cases turn into wild gardens again. There was quite recently an island site in the Strand in London, that was boarded in, and left undisturbed by passers-by and builders. Wild flowers soon began to grow there, and a correspondent wrote to one of the London papers, and gave a long list of over fifty different wild flowers that he had found growing on this deserted piece of ground.

FRANK ELLIS.

THE FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

III.—THE SHAMROCK OF IRELAND.

HAVING considered the Rose of England and the Thistle of Scotland, we will now see what we can find about the Shamrock of Ireland. I shall reverse my usual plan and take the history of the adoption of the shamrock as the national badge of Ireland first, and follow it by the botany of the plant. My reason for doing this I will explain later.

As has been the case with both the rose and the thistle, the origin of the adoption of the shamrock is shrouded in legend and mystery; it all seems to depend on St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. You read one book, and it tells you nothing is known about St. Patrick; and you read another, and it gives you a minute history of his life, work, travels, and affairs generally, with dates; so that one hardly knows what to believe! But I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of truth in the old stories of St. Patrick. The main account is that St. Patrick was born about 372, at Bannevan, a village of Tabernie, now identified as Kirkpatrick, near Dumbarton, which, as you know, is in the west of Scotland. He came of a family of priests and deacons, and was therefore brought up with a leaning towards religious work. In the olden times, the Irish often made raids on the West coast of Scotland and took away young men, of whom they practically made slaves in Ireland. In one of these raids, St. Patrick, when quite a young man, was taken a prisoner, carried to the North of Ireland, and there compelled to work as a shepherd. After some years he managed to escape back to his home, but he could not settle down, as he was constantly thinking of the Irish people, and felt he must go back to them to try to convert them to Christianity. The end of it was that he prepared himself by study, received ordination, and

later was consecrated a bishop. Finally, in 432, he set sail with fifteen companions from France, where he had resided for some time, and went to County Wicklow. He was not at first favourably received, but eventually he landed at Strangford Lough, and there founded his first church. After years of patient labour with varied success, he died at Saul, in County Down, about 492, and was buried there.

Now the story goes that when St. Patrick returned to Ireland as a missionary, he was unable to get the ears or understanding of the people. He was trying to explain to them the mystery of the Trinity, and could not bring home to them the truth of such a doctrine, when suddenly he was inspired to use a simple illustration which he found at his feet, viz., a plant having a trefoil leaf, that is, *one leaf composed of three leaflets*. Gathering a leaf from this plant, he showed it to the people and said: 'Is it not as possible for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be one, as for these three leaves to grow together on a single stalk?' The homely



1. WHITE OR DUTCH CLOVER (TREFOIL)

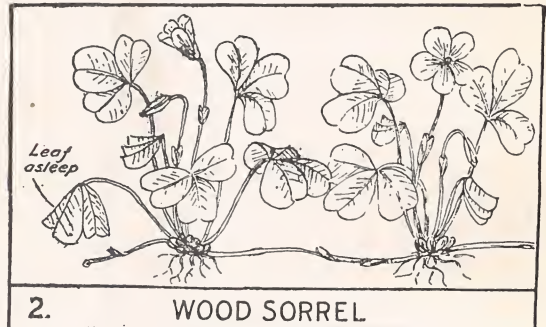
illustration convinced the people, and the story has it that many were converted there and then.

I am sure you will agree that this is a pretty story, and worthy to be the truth about the adoption of a trefoil as the Badge of Ireland. But now the trouble begins! Which of the many trefoils is *the* trefoil? People have written on this question over and over again, getting quite angry in their arguments in favour of the trefoil which *they* consider is *the* trefoil! That is why I am writing the botanical part of my article last. I wanted you to realise the reasons for the doubts before I told you about the plants, for even now there is no agreement, and so I must tell you of several.

There are a number of plants having trefoil leaves, but St. Patrick's shamrock must have been just a common plant to have been under foot. The name shamrock comes from the Celtic Seamrog, which means 'clover.' This has led some people to say that the real shamrock must be white or Dutch clover (*trifolium repens*). You probably know this plant well (fig. 1); it grows in our hay-fields, and is, in fact, a valuable plant there, as one plant will cover a large space in a very short time, it being of a creeping nature. The

leaves generally have a dark brown spot in the centre, and the flowers are white (sometimes slightly tinged with pink), in a cluster at the end of the flower-stalk. It has a sweet scent—hive-bees gathering much of their early honey from its blossoms. Some writers contend that this cannot be the true shamrock, because it was not introduced into Ireland till long after the time of St. Patrick.

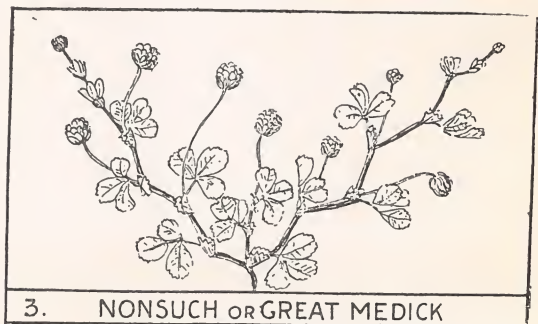
Then again, St. Patrick's Day, the supposed anniversary of his landing in Ireland, is March 17th; now, very



2. WOOD SORREL

few clovers have begun to put forth their leaves as early as that. But there is another trefoil whose foliage is very early, viz., Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis arctosella*). I show you a little plant in fig. 2. Its leaves are of a beautiful clear green, and are a very noticeable feature in the hedgerows in early spring; the leaves grow directly from the roots, as do also the flowers, which are palest mauve bells veined with purple; two tiny scale-leaves appear half-way up the stalk. Both leaf and flower-stalks are tinged with red near the roots.

One reason why some favour this plant as the true shamrock is, that some early writer said the leaves of the shamrock were *eaten* by people. Now, the leaves of the wood sorrel are sometimes used in salad; but too many should not be used, as they contain a certain



3. NONSUCH OR GREAT MEDICK

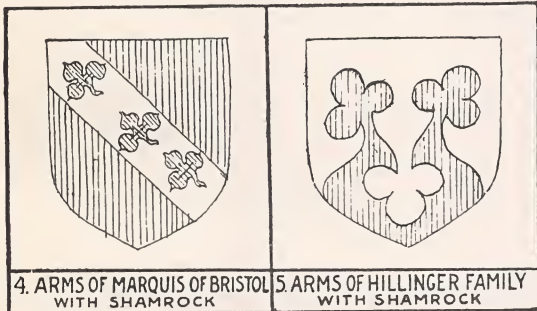
amount of poison—in fact, salts of lemon, which we use for removing ink-stains from linen, is made from the leaves of wood sorrel, and, of course these salts are a known poison. Another claim of the plant is the fact that the three leaflets are exactly alike, which is not the case with many trefoils.

Then there is another trefoil which has a claim, and that is Nonsuch, or Black Medick (*Medicago lupulina*). This is a tiny trefoil and has clusters of yellow flowers, looking like tiny yellow balls. Fig. 3 shows you a

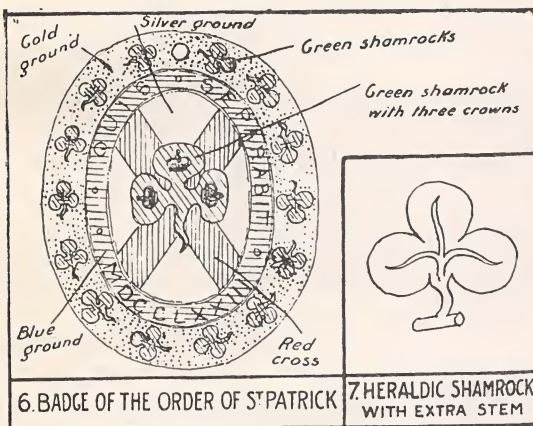
drawing of a spray; it is a woody little plant of a creeping nature.

Now, whatever may have been the *true* shamrock, it is certain that medick is the plant which is usually sold to be worn on March 17th. Plants have been sent to me from Ireland as being *the* shamrock; I have planted them in my garden, and behold! in the summer, I have medick spreading everywhere!

I have not been able to find an exact date for the adoption of the badge, but I found trefoils in the arms



of the family of the Marquis of Bristol—as shown in fig. 4—and also in the arms of the now extinct family of Hillinger (fig. 5). Of course it appears in the Order of St. Patrick, which was founded by George III. in 1783. Fig. 6 shows you a sketch of the badge of St. Patrick. Here you have the true heraldic shamrock 'slipped'—that is, stalked with three crowns—and also a number of shamrocks forming an outer border to the badge. The trefoil is sometimes used in heraldry—as

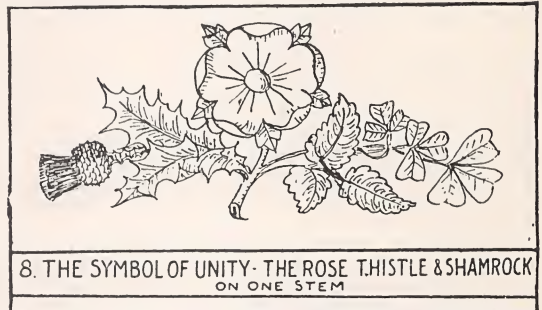


shown in fig. 7—with an extra bit of stem; but this is rare.

After the South African War, Queen Victoria ordered the Irish regiments, on account of their extreme bravery, to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day. Also, in 1900, she had the fleurs-de-lys (of France) removed from the Royal Crown, and shamrocks put in their places. Both these actions greatly pleased the Irish people, and have, of course, brought the old story of St. Patrick and the shamrock again into popularity.

A legend has it that St. Patrick drove out all reptiles from Ireland by means of the shamrock, and, of

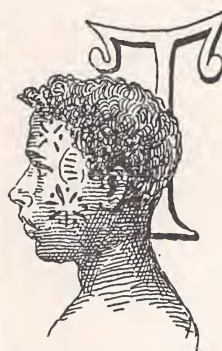
course, you know that good fortune is supposed to come to the person who finds a four-leaved shamrock! The shamrock is now on our coins—as I showed you in my sketch of a florin in my last article (see page 45)—and the emblems of England, Scotland, and Ireland are now our Union badge, all growing from one common stem (fig. 8), thus denoting the perfect unity which now exists between these three countries.



I should like to point out that in figs. 4, 5, and 6, I have used the heraldic system of lines, &c., to indicate the heraldic colours, viz., Silver ('Argent' in the language of heraldry) is represented by a plain white surface; Red ('Gules') by upright lines; Blue ('Azure') by horizontal lines; Green ('Vert'), by diagonal lines from left to right; Gold ('Or') by spots or specks on a white ground. Purple and Black I have not wanted, but it may be useful for you to know that Purple ('Purpure') is indicated like green by sloping lines, but from right to left. Black ('Sable') is shown by the space being covered with upright lines crossed by horizontal lines, forming a network.

E. M. BARLOW.

VEGETABLE IVORY.



THE difficulty of obtaining ivory for all the purposes for which it can be used has led to the use of various substitutes for it, some of which are natural products, while others are artificial ones. Vegetable ivory is one of the substitutes, and it is obtained, as its name implies, from a plant. This plant is a species of palm, which is found in the northern parts of South America, across the Isthmus of Panama, and in some of the West Indian Islands.

This palm does not grow tall, as other palms do. It has a beautiful crown of spreading leaves of a pale green colour, which seems to rise almost from the ground, springing from one end of what appears to be a long, trailing root exposed above the ground. But this, which seems to be a root, is really a slender stem, which is probably too weak to stand upright under the weight of its crown of leaves, and therefore trails along the surface of the ground, sometimes extending for a distance of nearly twenty feet. The huge leaves, each of which is divided into narrow leaflets, and curls over at the top like a gigantic feather, are often longer than

the stem. They are commonly used by the native Indians for thatching their huts.

When the palm has flowered, one or more large round fruits are produced at the base of the leaves and near the ground. Each of these fruits will measure seven or eight inches in diameter, and weigh many pounds. The natives are said to call them negro's heads, on account of their appearance. Each fruit is a sort of nut, and contains six or eight kernels of a rounded oval form, and from an inch to two inches long. The outside of each kernel is brown, but the inner substance is white, close-grained, and hard, like ivory. This is the vegetable ivory. A very careful inspection will show that in some respects it looks rather different from true ivory. It has a slightly fatty appearance, and it has not the markings which are so noticeable in good ivory from an elephant's tusk. Nevertheless, it bears a very remarkable likeness to true ivory.

The nuts are known commercially as Corozo nuts, and they are imported into Great Britain in large quantities, chiefly from the South American States of Colombia and Ecuador. The average yearly import is probably about a thousand tons, of which Birmingham takes a large share. The kernels of vegetable ivory, being small, are mostly manufactured into small articles, such as buttons, umbrella-handles, small boxes, studs, and beads. Many of these objects are turned in the lathe, and sometimes it is possible to join two or more nuts together, when the joint can be hidden in the cuts made by the lathe.

Let us return now to consider a little more closely the fruit as it grows upon the palm. Each kernel contains a seed, and the hard substance which we call vegetable ivory is really the store of food which the plant has laid up for the growing seed to live upon until it is large enough, and strong enough, to take up its own food from the soil and the air. The vegetable ivory is only hard when the nut is perfectly ripe. The substance first appears as a clear, tasteless fluid, which travellers sometimes drink when they are thirsty. Presently the fluid turns milky, and acquires a sweet taste. At this stage the nut is eagerly devoured by hogs, bears, turkeys, and other animals. In a little while the milky fluid begins to harden, and this change continues until the hard ivory is produced. If the nut is exported, and the ivory is utilised in manufactures, it remains hard. But if the nut should drop from the parent plant, and the seed should begin to grow, the ivory turns soft again. If a growing seed, which has already raised its shoot above the ground, be taken up and examined, it will be found that the ivory which is still left has turned again into a sort of milky pulp, which is readily absorbed by the growing plant, and forms its only food, while it is, as it were, a nursing.

It is truly remarkable to find a plant producing a substance which resembles the ivory of an elephant's tusk so closely; but it is still more wonderful, I think, to find that a plant can provide so carefully for the future nourishment of its young, when they are cast off to start life on their own account. Yet this is a provision which all plants, or nearly all plants, make for their offspring. When we eat flour or bread, when we eat peas, or nuts, or rice, we are nourishing ourselves with the stores of food which the various plants have set aside for their own descendants.

W. A. ATKINSON.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 71.)

'IS the prisoner known?' said the President, leaning back in his chair and haughtily surveying the Court.

'Yes,' said Uncle Charlie. 'His name is Selim, and he is in my employ. He is a very good boy on the whole—he is useful, and good-tempered; but he has fallen into a very wicked habit of stealing small articles. If he does not overcome this very great fault it will be the ruin of him. I shall have to send him away, and he will find himself in prison some day. If he makes up his mind to overcome this very grave fault, he will grow up a good man, and I shall be proud to keep him in my service.'

The words were uttered with seriousness, and the prisoner was visibly affected, as the newspapers say. Had there been sufficient light, the Court would have seen a tear steal down poor Selim's cheek. Perhaps it would have been better if the matter had ended here. However, in spite of the effect produced by Uncle Charlie's earnestness, the Lieutenants continued the mock trial; if they had seen Selim's woebegone face they might have relented.

'Is there any witness to the act?' asked the President. Lieutenant Stoddart now pushed Dick forward.

'I saw the prisoner in the act,' he said. 'His hand was in the box containing the property—fixed in the rat-trap.'

'Do you mean,' said the President, 'that the prisoner was using a rat-trap for the purpose of abstracting the property? Had he got a rat-trap?'

'No, your worship,' replied Dick. 'The rat-trap had got him.'

There was a laugh from the British section of the court.

'Did you see any of the property in his possession,' demanded the judge.

'Yes,' replied Dick; 'I saw one roll out of his sash.'

Selim was not to be so easily subdued, however; he burst out in angry accents: 'They wasn't property, they was oranges, and Mister Dick eat some of them too.'

The laugh was now at Dick's expense. When it had subsided the President turned to Dick, saying, 'That will do. Now, prisoner, what have you to say in your own defence?'

'They was only oranges,' grumbled Selim.

'It is not the value,' said the President, majestically raising his hand. 'To steal a small thing is as bad as to steal a great one.'

But Selim's spirit of resistance was rising. 'That all very well,' he burst out. 'That all very well for Mister Dick too. Didn't I see him taking two slices of meat at dinner yesterday, and putting them in his pocket, when I was waiting at table?'

There was an explosion of laughter, and Dick began to feel himself getting red in the face. But Dick's face was saved by a sudden bump—a grinding noise; and the *Isis* shook from stem to stern. The President, who was tilting his chair on the two back legs, and heartily enjoying the laugh at Dick's expense, rolled over backward on to the deck. The *Isis* had run aground on a sand-bank. Fortunately it proved no very serious matter. The crew got out their long poles, and with

much pushing and shouting from the men and vigorous language from the Reis, they got her afloat again. This made them very late with dinner, and the boys were getting very fidgety about the dervish—how they should find the opportunity of descending into the hold, without attracting notice, bothered them. They agreed that in future it would not do for both of them to be missing at the same time every evening. Plainly it was necessary for them to take the duty in turns. It was decided that when it was Harry's turn he should wait till every one was in his bunk before he ventured, but on Dick's nights the business should be done earlier, and Harry should be on deck to keep up appearances. This night was to be Harry's turn, and Dick gave him full instructions how to proceed.

'When you drop down you'll find the loose board about six feet to the right. The cord is down there, and mind the holes in the planks. So good-night, old chap, and give my kind regards to old Omar. Kebabs is the word, and don't forget it.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE next morning Selim appeared with his fingers bound up in rag and a downcast expression on his face. In silence he helped the steward remove the breakfast, brushed the crumbs from the table and set the only two books the boat could boast—a railway time-table and a Cook's Tours—with the bottle of flowers in the centre; instead of whisking the crumbs on to the floor and shoving the books into position with much laughter. He took up the coffee-pot and crumb-tray and went along the deck to the galley with such an air of dejection that Dick felt sorry for him. So before the boxing commenced he went up to him and said: 'Selim, old chap, how's your hand? I hope it didn't get hurt very much.'

Selim lifted up his head with an indignant look on his face.

'I think we went rather too far last night,' acknowledged Dick. 'I'm sorry; but really you know you must give up those stealing tricks.' Selim still looked sulky. 'I hope you are not going to be nasty about it. Let's be friends again: but you must give up those pilfering tricks, you know. It's beastly mean. It's downright wicked, as Uncle said. It wasn't quite right what you said about me—pocketing the slices of meat at dinner-time. That was different: the food was mine, I had paid for it—at any rate Uncle had. That wasn't stealing, and it so happens I did not take it for myself, which I had a right to if I wanted. I took it to give to some one else. So you see it was quite different. So don't be nasty about it: you made me look pretty foolish, I can tell you.'

Selim walked away without a word. Dick said much the same to Lieutenant Maitland when they were putting on the gloves.

'Poor old Selim, I think we rubbed it in a little too much last night: he seems awfully sore about it. Though I'm glad of what Uncle said.'

The Lieutenant laughed. 'It'll be a lesson to him to keep his fingers from picking and stealing—the young rascal.'

Selim was indeed sore on the subject: he had been unmercifully chaffed by the crew at night and again in the morning, and had not been able to carry the matter off with a laugh in his usual way. He did not require to be told who set the trap in the orange-box, but his

was not a revengeful nature, and if he retaliated on Dick the next day, as he certainly did, it was not in malice, but in a sporting spirit of returning tit for tat in an artistic way.

This is how it happened. It was very hot indeed that day: there was no breeze, and after lunch it was almost unbearable. The dahabeeyah was moored to the bank beside a native town which was little more than two streets of mud huts and a larger house of the head man. The sun streamed down upon the deck, and as the boat was at a standstill there was not even the slight draught caused by its movement. Since early morning they had been tracking—that is to say the crew, being harnessed to a long rope, towed the dahabeeyah from the bank like barge-horses, which is very heavy work indeed in the broiling sun.

'I can't stand this any longer,' said Dick, puffing. 'What do you say to a dip, Harry? We will get the felucca out. There's a nice quiet place over yonder in that bend. We can take Selim to look after the boat: what do you say?'

'Water's not very inviting,' said Harry, as he looked over the side. 'Pretty thick, isn't it? If we get a mouthful it will sink us.'

Nevertheless they paddled to the sheltered bend on the opposite side of the river with Selim squatting in the stern.

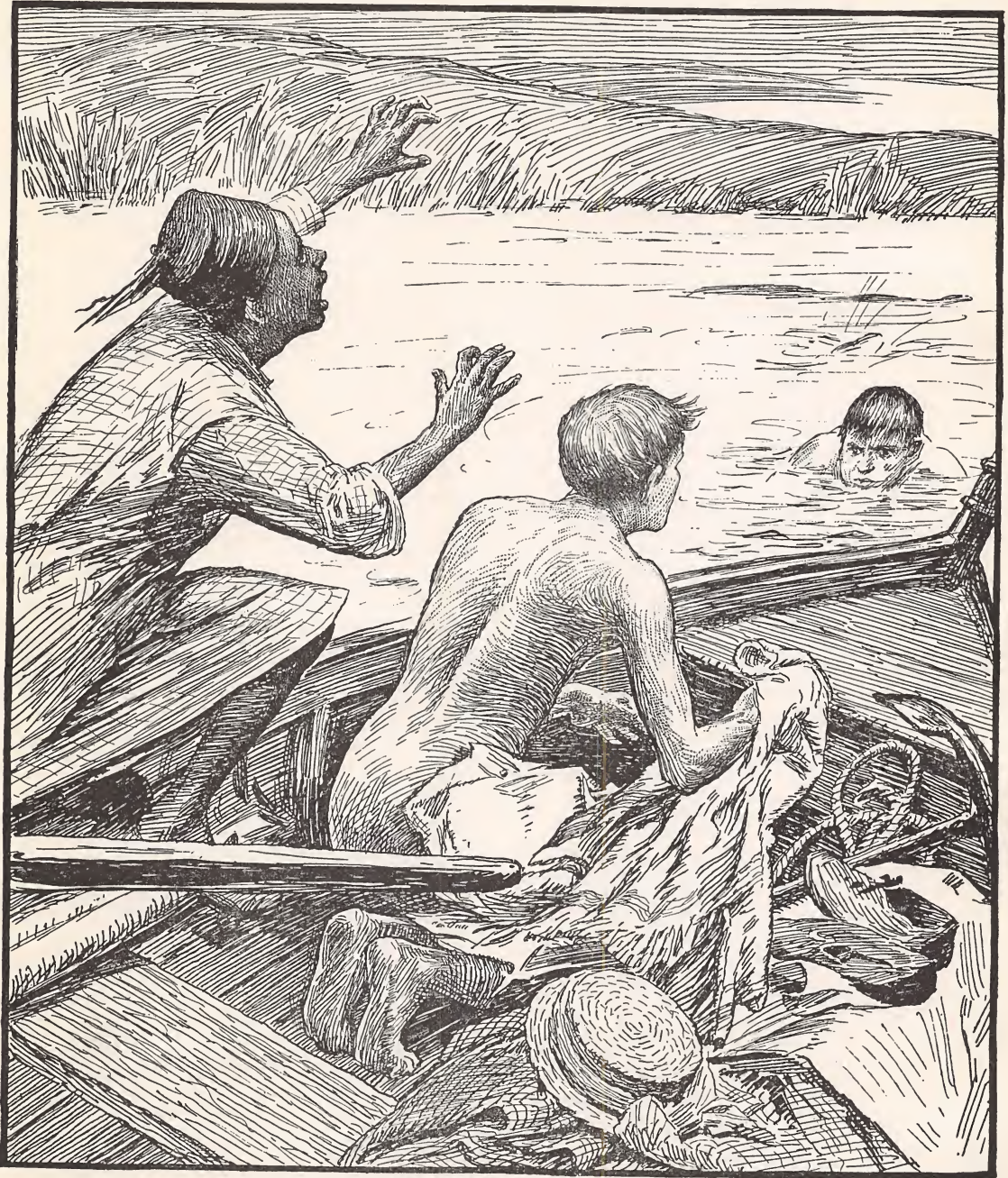
In a few moments the boys were in the water at no great distance from the weedy bank, and the passengers lazily watched them from the deck of the dahabeeyah. All went well and the boys enjoyed their swim thoroughly. Harry was out first, scrambled into the boat, and was rubbing himself down with a towel, when Selim's eye fell on Dick who was exhibiting a rather lame side-stroke for the admiration of the onlookers and making a good deal of puffing and splash. As he approached the boat Selim's eyes almost started from his head, he sprang up with a fearful visage, and waving his arms like a loose-jointed windmill, screamed: 'Quick! Quick! Quick, Mister Dick! A crockdile—crockdile—quick! quick! He frantically seized an oar to strike the horrid creature on the head. His starting eyes had passed over Dick's head and were glued to a spot behind him.

Harry was kneeling in the bottom of the boat, rubbing vigorously at his head, his teeth chattering, as they always did when he came out of the water. He seized the thwarts of the boat with both hands and echoed: 'Quick! Quick!'

Poor Dick struck out for the boat, struggling with all his might. Visions of being snapped in two thrilled him. Visions of a horrid snout, and two rolling, blood-shot eyes seemed to burn into him through his back. His legs seemed entangled in water-weed so that he could scarcely get along. Selim and Harry clutched him. They tugged, he scrambled, he was in on his chest at the bottom of the boat, his shins grazed and his big toe bent in a way that made him limp for a couple of days. He lay panting at the bottom of the boat: but he was saved.

With a shudder they looked over the side at the Crocodile. A small log of wood bobbed by the boat. Their jaws dropped and they looked at one another. A faint smile dawned on the lips of Selim and ascended to his eyes: he folded his hands meekly and said: 'It look like a rat-trap, don't it?'

(Continued on page 86.)



"Dick struck out for the boat, struggling with all his might."



“Her hands clutching a long stick, which she pushed to and fro under the duckweed.”

THE BROWN-APER PARCEL.

'KATHLEEN, are you there? Do look what I have found!'

Leslie came to a standstill before the little garden plot in which his sister was working, and held a mouldy-looking object towards her on the prongs of a battered fork.

'It's an old earwig-trap,' he said, enthusiastically: 'just what I have wanted for ever so long.'

'What on earth for?' asked Kathleen, looking disparagingly at the fork, as she advanced a step nearer.

'For a joke that I'm going to play off on Dimples. She's so frightfully keen on that silly museum of hers, and I'm going to rag her beautifully. You know Uncle Henry is coming to-morrow?'

Kathleen nodded, leaning forward on her spade as she watched her brother's face with eager eyes.

'Well, she's arranging all her things to show him, and labelling them and everything, and she's awfully excited about it. I thought it would be such a joke to wrap up this old thing in a parcel, and put it on the hall-table while she's at school to-morrow. Miss Jesset's coming in the morning, and she often brings curios for Dimple, so she will think she left it for her. We will tell her it's a Roman lamp, or something. She'd be certain to believe it, and she will look so silly when Uncle Henry sees it, and tells her what it really is!'

'We shall have to get the earth off it,' said Kathleen, rather doubtfully.

'We will go and give it a clean-up now,' replied Leslie. 'Come along to the stables. We can do the gardens after tea.'

As the sound of their footsteps died away on the loose gravel, a small, wiry figure sprawled down the trunk of a tree which overhung Kathleen's garden, and started running along the path in the opposite direction. He did not pause until he reached the threshold of a little wooden shed, standing in the shelter of the fruit wall, and as he tried to turn the stiff handle of the door a voice from within bailed him, joyfully: 'Oh, Michael, do come and help me!'

In another minute the door had opened, and Michael almost fell over Dimples, as she sat on the floor with her lap full of fossils, and an expression of blank despair on her face.

'I want to get them all labelled by to-morrow,' she said.

'I can't stay,' replied Michael, breathlessly; 'I have got all that extra French to do to-night; only I wanted to tell you something I heard just now—quite by mistake. I was up in the apple-tree over Kathleen's garden, and she came along and began digging. I waited for her to go, because I don't want her to find out our secret place; and then Leslie came to talk to her, and I heard all they said.' And he proceeded to pour out the story of all that he had heard.

Dimples shook her head doubtfully as he finished. 'You ought to have told them that you'd heard,' she said. 'It wasn't fair.'

'I don't care!' blazed out Michael. 'It's jolly mean of them to try and fool you, and I mean to pay them out by letting their joke fall as flat as a pancake!'

This was a new aspect of the situation, and Dimples looked up with a face full of interest. 'What shall I do?' she asked.

Michael looked round thoughtfully. 'You had better take the parcel out and pitch it away in the garden,' he said. 'Then when Leslie asks if Miss Jesset brought you any new curios, you can say she sent you an old earwig-trap, and you have thrown it away. They will feel awfully silly, after taking so much trouble about it.'

Dimples nodded, smilingly. It certainly would be a splendid score off Kathleen and Leslie, and Michael had been quite right when he had said that they deserved it.

It was late on the following morning when the little girl returned from school, and found the heavy brown-paper parcel awaiting her on the table in the hall. She smiled as she lifted it into her arms, and, putting down her satchel of books, made her way through a side-door into the garden beyond. There was not time to remove the paper and string, as the luncheon-gong might sound at any minute, so she ran fleetly over the lawn towards the paddock, never stopping until she reached the shallow pond, on the slimy edges of which three or four ducks waddled unsteadily to and fro. In another minute a heavy splash hurried them, quacking, on to the bank, and Dimples was running quickly back to the house, empty-handed and triumphant.

On the doorstep Michael was awaiting her in some impatience. 'Buck up! You're late!' he said. 'Uncle Henry's come, and they've started lunch, and Mother sent me to find you.'

'I thought he was coming at tea-time,' panted Dimples, as she pulled off her hat, and tried to reduce an unruly mop of curls to a semblance of tidiness. 'I have thrown it into the pond, Michael!' she added, her eyes sparkling mischievously.

Luncheon was nearly over when Uncle Henry leaned back in his chair, and, thrusting his hands into the big side-pockets of his coat, brought out three small parcels. 'One for Kathleen, one for Dimples, and one for Michael!' he said. 'Leslie must find his after lunch. It was too big to go into a pocket, so it is waiting on the table in the hall.'

Dimples had jumped excitedly to her feet, but at the last words she paused, and her frightened eyes met Michael's across the table. 'A brown-paper parcel?' she faltered.

'Yes, and a heavy one, too,' replied her uncle, smiling. 'You go and see if you can find it for him, Dimples!'

Not waiting for a second bidding, the little girl stumbled to the door, and a moment later it had closed behind her with a bang, as she raced blindly through the house, and away over the lawn beyond. The minutes went by, and still the five in the dining-room waited for her to reappear. It was Michael who at last jumped to his feet and opened the door. 'She's not in the hall, Uncle Henry. Shall I go and look for her?' he said; and in another moment he, too, was making his way across the lawn as fast as his legs could carry him, never pausing until he was in sight of the duck-pond in the paddock. Then he stopped suddenly, and stared in astonishment at the little figure with clothes tucked round her waist, knee-deep in the slimy water. It was Dimples, her arms bare to the elbow, and her hands clutching a long stick, which she pushed to and fro under the duckweed.

As Michael ran forward, he saw her suddenly plunge both arms into the water, and when she raised them a moment later they were clasping what looked like a dripping lump of black mud. Then she raised her eyes,

and, catching sight of him, held it up excitedly in her arms. 'It's all right! They aren't spoilt! They're roller-skates!' she cried.

It was some little time before the slimy string was disentangled from the skates, which were almost unrecognisable for the mud which coated their smooth surface and clogged the little wheels.

On their hands and knees, Dimples and Michael worked feverishly, scrubbing with all their strength, until a distant shout made them look up suddenly.

'What *are* you doing?'

And then they saw Leslie racing along the path towards them, and staring in astonishment at their heated faces and mud-stained arms. It was a long time before everything was explained, as all three had a good deal to say, and each felt a little to blame for the disastrous adventure.

'As a matter of fact, we threw away the earwig-trap,' said Leslie. 'Kathleen thought it was rather a mean trick to play, so we decided not to do it.'

'It was far meaner of me to listen, and not tell you,' put in Michael, humbly.

'And I have spoilt the skates,' added Dimples, looking sorrowfully at the muddy wreckage in the grass.

'O, no, you haven't!' said Leslie, cheerfully. 'I shall easily get them put right; and I vote we don't say anything to Uncle Henry about all this. We will just keep it to ourselves.'

He stopped suddenly, as an idea seemed to occur to him; then he stooped down, and began fixing the skates on to his boots.

'What *are* you going to do?' asked Dimples. But Leslie only smiled.

'Help me to my feet,' he said; and then, as the two watched him in astonishment, he took some stumbling steps forward through the grass. They saw him moving with unsteady strides towards the pond, and a minute later he had rolled down the little incline, and was up to his ankles in the slimy water, which washed the mud away quickly.

VIOLA VIVIAN.

A BABY SONG.

SLEEP, Baby, sleep! the stars in the skies
Are forgetting to twinkle, for sleep's in their eyes.

Hush-a-bye, hush! the birds in their nest
Are forgetting to fly, for it's time for their rest.

The World is asleep,

Night-time is deep—

So hush! dear—and sleep—only sleep—only sleep!

Sleep, Baby, sleep! The waves from the sea
Are murmuring 'good-night' to Baby and me.

Hush-a-bye, hush! the roses so red

Have curled up their petals, and 'crept' into bed—

Roses are shy,

Night-time is nigh,

So hush! dear, and sleep—only sleep—only sleep!

The man in the Sun has gone home to the West,
He's forgetting to shine—for he likes sleeping best:

And over the tree-tops creeps pale Mr. Moon,

With pretty dreams, Baby—if you will sleep soon.

Sleepy-time's here

Now for you, dear—

So hush! dear, and sleep—only sleep—only sleep!

THE OLD TOWNS OF ENGLAND.

I.—THE STORY OF WINCHELSEA.

WHEN William the Conqueror came to England for the second time, in the year 1067, after an absence in Normandy, he landed at the fortified town of Winchelsea. It stood at the mouth of a river, and was surrounded on three sides by wide marshes. In every way the place was prosperous, and it had several fine churches and monasteries. Besides the battlements there was a large fleet of fishing-boats, and there was also a considerable trade with France in wood from the forest of Anderida, that was being gradually cleared from a portion of the marshes.

But in this part of England the coast was gradually altering its shape. Near the mouth of the river great quantities of shingle were being washed up, and that was gradually changing the course of the river, so that after a time it became of not so much use as a harbour. The banks of shingle that protected the town from the sea on the other side were being washed away, and the waves were able to encroach right up to the walls.

In the reign of Edward I., the inhabitants began to feel great anxiety as to their safety; whenever there was a storm, big pieces of the sea-wall that had been built for protection were washed away, and at last, during some very severe gales, the waves rushed right into the town, and beat so furiously against the buildings that one of its churches was destroyed.

On the Eve of St. Agatha's Day, 1287, another gale completely washed away more of the buildings, and there were many severe storms later in that century which devastated Winchelsea still further. The waves left a deposit of salt on the surrounding fields, destroying much of the vegetation and damaging the trees. This further added to the alarm of the inhabitants, for with their trade driven away by the alteration of the river's course, and the cultivation of the land outside rendered impossible, their means of subsistence looked very precarious.

About two miles away stood a rocky sandstone headland, called Igham. It was crown land, belonging to the Kings of England, and inhabited only by a few farmers and millers, who found its breezy tableland a splendid spot for their mills. There was also a house for the royal bailiff, when he came there to collect the King's dues. It was surrounded by water on three sides, the most sheltered of which would form a splendid harbour. Edward I. and his queen came to Winchelsea to listen to an account of the troubles of the inhabitants, and as there seemed to be little hope of saving the town from complete destruction, Edward gave them permission to build a new Winchelsea on his Manor of Igham. The building was begun in 1281, and Sir John de Kirkeley, Bishop of Ely, was chosen by the King as architect. In 1288 the land, ten acres in all, was formally handed over to the Mayor and Corporation of Winchelsea.

Five years were given to the building, and for seven the citizens were to be exempted from paying taxes. Three churches were begun, and named after those in the old town—St. Thomas, St. Leonard, and St. Giles, while the monasteries of St. Bartholomew and the Grey Friars were rebuilt on new sites.

Instead of stone, ramparts of earth with battlements were erected, and the town could only be entered by one or other of the three gates. They were called the

Strand Gate, the Pipewell or Ferry Gate, and the New Gate, the road from which joined the mainland. Outside the New Gate stood the Holy Cross of Winchelsea, the first landmark seen by travellers approaching from the land and by the ships returning into port.

By the time the new town was complete, very little of the old remained, the sea having completely covered the old site. There is some doubt as to the exact spot where the first Winchelsea stood, but it is believed to have been near the place where Camber Castle now stands on the marshes.

The new town soon flourished exceedingly, and was high in the King's favour. A large part of the British Fleet used the harbour as its chief port, and the sailors of the squadron wore a white shirt with a large red cross and the Winchelsea arms upon it. A great many small boats were busy with herring fishery. Beside the harbour-master's tower, which was not far from the Ferry Gate, stood the chapel of St. Leonard. The monks had carved a little image of the saint, which was attached to a weather vane on the roof. In return for small gifts of money, they would turn the vane in the direction of the right wind for the sailing of the fishing fleet.

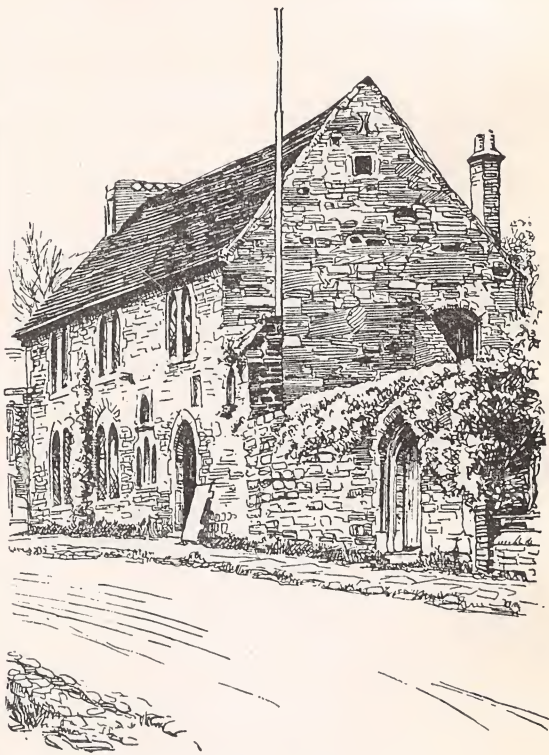
Edward I. was a constant visitor to Winchelsea, and once, when reviewing the fleet, he took up his position on the ramparts to watch the ships below. His horse took fright at the noise made by the sails of a windmill that was working close by. Infuriated by the King's spurs and whip, it suddenly leapt over the parapet.



The Strand Gate, Winchelsea.

The horrified spectators expected to see the King thrown and killed, but he managed to keep his seat. The horse fell on its feet, and then slid some way on to the road below, both horse and rider having a miraculous escape.

But the existence of Winchelsea was not always peaceful. In the wars with France, in the Middle Ages, it was constantly being raided. It was captured by the French in 1337; and again, in 1359, they landed and set fire to the town, killing many of the inhabitants. In 1360 they came again, this time killing all the men in the place; and they were constantly pillaging it for many years after. Through these constant visitations, the place began to decay and fall

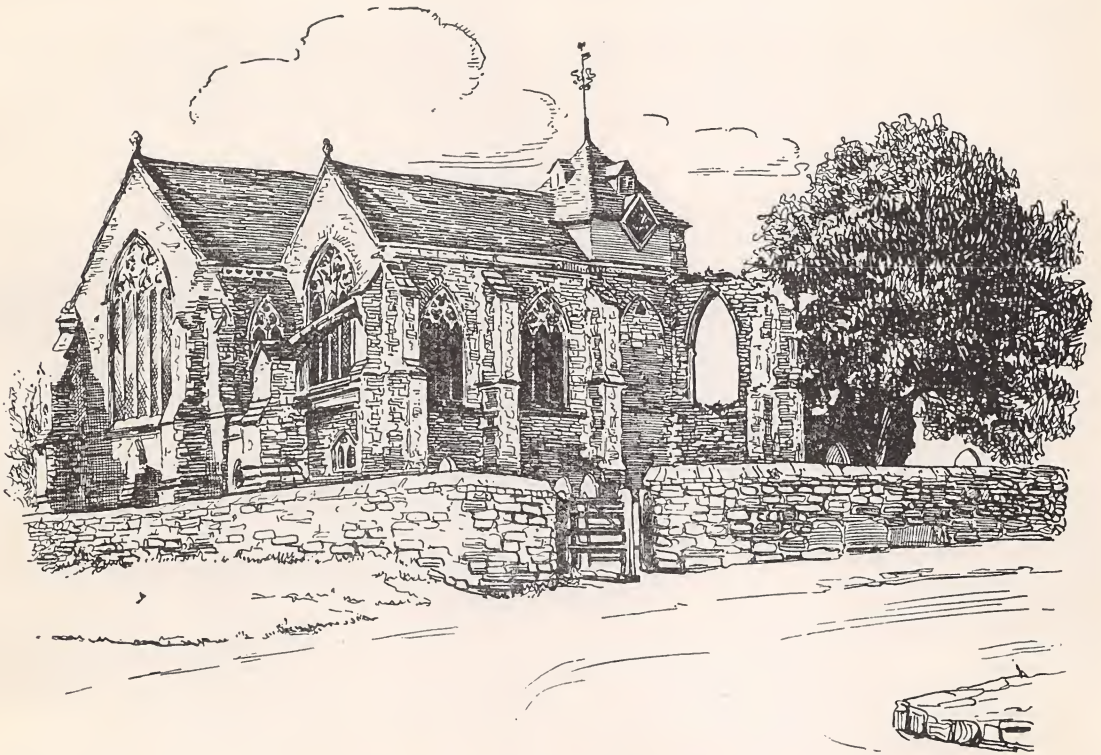


The Court House, Winchelsea.

into ruins. In Henry the Fifth's reign some attempt was made at repair, and the Pipewell Gate was rebuilt, but it was of little avail. Later, the dissolution of the monasteries was almost a final blow, as there were several rich religious communities in the place.

Natural causes also affected the prosperity and helped the fall of Winchelsea. The sea began to recede from the foot of the hills once more, and after a time the headland was again surrounded by bare marshes with merely a little stream flowing through them, instead of the once large harbour.

Winchelsea to-day is only a small village, but still possesses a mayor and corporation. All three gates are standing, and the few streets are still in the rectangular form of the old squares. In the centre of the



The Church of St. Thomas, Winchelsea.

place rises the glorious church of St. Thomas, or at least part of the church, for only the choir is in use, with the ruined transepts outside. There is great difference of opinion as to whether the nave ever existed. Some say it was burnt down by the French; probably the foundations were laid, but as Winchelsea fell from its greatness and became poor, the building was never continued. In the south aisle is the Alard Chantry, containing the beautiful tombs of Gervase Alard, admiral of the Western Fleet at the time of Edward I., and his grandson Stephen, another admiral. In the north aisle are two older tombs, believed to have been brought from the church of St. Thomas, in the first Winchelsea.

A few stones mark the position of the church of St. Leonard, and the ruins of the Grey Friars' monastery can still be seen.

But of greater age than either of the churches is the Court House, on the eastern side of the noble square in the middle of the town. The simplicity of its style, and the thickness of its walls, show that it is of a very early date. Here, probably, Edward I. stayed when he visited his Manor of Igham, as it is said to have been the home of the royal bailiff. There is a cavern under one end of the building, now blocked up, that must have led to the prisons, and there is evidence that other buildings were attached to it.

The romantic air of its early history still pervades

Winchelsea, giving it an undefinable charm, as it sleeps upon its hill among the marshes, the sea now two miles away. With its sister town of Rye close by, it stands a sentinel of the past, and it will always be full of echoes from that past, for the citizens have now bought up the land just round the middle of the town, to prevent any thoughtless destruction of the beauty our forefathers knew so well how to create.

CAROL'S EXAM.

'MOTHER, do you think I shall pass?' 'I think you have as good a chance as any, dear.' But Mrs. Burnett looked a little anxious as she spoke.

'I wish I knew whether I should or not,' Carol went on, impatiently; 'because, you see, then I shouldn't be nervous.'

Her mother sighed as she rose to cut the bread-and-butter for tea. 'Yes, dear; we often wish we could see even a little way ahead; but I don't know that it would really help us much if we could.'

'Father's late to-night,' cried the little girl, running to the window. 'Oh! here he is.'

She did not see the quick look that passed between her father and mother as she flew to greet him, nor did she notice that he held her closer than usual as he

kissed her; she was too much absorbed in her own affairs to observe they were trying to keep something from her.

'So,' remarked her father as they sat down to tea, 'this wonderful exam. begins to-morrow. does it?'

'Yes, and I do want to pass so dreadfully.'

'Let me see, what is it you get if you do pass?'

'Why, I get into Blankhampton School, where Nellie Smithers has gone. There's only one vacancy. Oh! I do hope I shall get it.'

"The glory lies in the struggle, not the prize," quoted her father. 'Well, if you do pass and go away to Blankhampton, that means new frocks, I suppose?'

'Oh, yes, and a trunk like Nellie had, and a hat with the school colours, and a gym. dress, and a tennis racket and hockey stick. Why, Father, I shall want heaps of things.'

'So it appears.' Her father spoke dryly, but Carol did not notice that either. She chattered on about the school and all she was going to do there quite happily, with no shadow of doubt troubling her.

The morning came, and Carol started for school quite gayly, but when she reached the big hall where the exam. was to be held, her heart sank. There seemed so many girls, some of them older than herself, and all strangers except her schoolmate, Jessie, who was also competing for the scholarship. A wave of depression swept over Carol.

'You know,' her mistress had said to her that morning, 'you must not be very disappointed if you don't pass, for you are the youngest scholar I have ever sent in for this. But I think you will,' she added, with an encouraging smile, as she left them.

The week glided by, and the examination was over at last, much to the relief of most of the young candidates; and Carol went home, to await, with what patience she might, the results. She tried to urge her mother to begin buying her outfit, so that she would be ready 'in case'; but Mrs. Burnett would not, so the little girl appealed to her father.

'You see the things would be useful at this school, Father,' she said, hanging lovingly over the back of his chair as they sat round the fire one evening.

'That's true, as far as it goes,' he answered; 'but you see, lassie, we don't want to buy anything now if we can possibly help it.'

'Why not, Father?' She came to sit on the arm of the chair as she asked the question.

'Well, I think, Carol, you are quite old enough to understand some of our business affairs, especially when they relate to yourself, and you may as well know that the bank where my money was has failed, and I have very, very little left. The next two or three years will be a terrible pull for us, I expect, and we shall all have to put our shoulders to the wheel.'

'You mean I shall have to earn my own living?' cried Carol, tremendously excited.

'Hardly yet,' answered Mr. Burnett, smiling; 'but you will have to help Mother to keep down expenses.'

'Then if I do pass I won't be able to go to Blankhampton!' exclaimed the little girl in dismay.

'My dear child,' returned her father, pulling her on to his knee, 'if you pass, your mother and I will do our very best to provide you with what is necessary, and send you to Blankhampton, expensive place though it is. It will be very difficult, but we mean to do it somehow.'

'Father, you're a brick,' said Carol, hugging him; 'if I can only go there I don't mind a bit about being poor.'

Carol was not naturally a selfish little girl, but, being an only child, and having no knowledge of poverty, she scarcely understood the meaning of what her father had told her. Still, she thought about it a good deal in the days that followed, especially when she went with her mother to look over houses, always smaller than their present one, where they had lived ever since her parents were married.

'Mother, shall you be sorry to move?' she asked one day, as they came away from 'not a bit a nice house,' which they had been looking over.

'Very sorry, dear, but it can't be helped; there is still just the chance that we may not have to, only if we do we must do it quickly, so I want to be prepared.'

'When will you know?' asked Carol.

'When the results of the examination are out. You see, if you go to Blankhampton there will only be Father and myself, so we shall not want such a large house.'

But Carol had an uneasy feeling that that was not the real reason, and began to wonder if Blankhampton would cost so much that they could not afford to keep on the big house.

The days passed on, until at last the results of the examination came, and the head mistress gave them out after afternoon school, and Carol went home with a very sober face. She found tea laid and her parents awaiting her; the fire gleamed brightly on the shining cups and copper tea-kettle singing on its stand. The little girl stood looking at them and swinging her satchel, then—'I have failed,' she announced.

'Poor old lady, hard lines!' Her father crossed the room to pat her consolingly on the back, but she ran to her mother.

'I'm glad, glad, glad; yes, I am,' she sobbed, wrathfully, hiding her face.

'Glad, Carol? Why, dear?' whispered her mother, holding her close.

'Because now you can have all the money you'd have spent on me, and we needn't move, and I'm a selfish pig, but I won't be any more!'

'My dear little girl!' said Mr. Burnett; and then there was a silence, broken only by the hissing of the kettle, until Mr. Burnett spoke again; and this time he only said, 'Let's have some tea.'

Two years later Carol again entered for the examination and passed with honours, the delay only making her triumph, when it came, the sweeter.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 79.)

THE *Isis* kept on her course southward and the days lengthened into weeks, but no day was without its interest. Sailing, tracking when the wind failed, and punting, and at night mooring beside the bank or in some little port: and by day visiting many a temple-ruin and village bazaar, for the Nile is like no other river—the Nile is Egypt—on its banks

stand all its ancient cities and wonders and all its modern life. And now the boys were looking forward to seeing in a few days the crowning wonder of all—Karnak and Luxor—the world-famous ruins of Thebes, the ancient capital of Southern Egypt—the great temple of Ammon and the colossal statues of Memnon: and Uncle Charlie looked forward as eagerly as the boys to exploring these wonders of the world once again, with the added pleasure of observing their effect on the youngsters.

Dick had picked up more boxing from the young officers than he had ever learned at school, but Harry was a failure. He had a silly trick of putting the point of his tongue between his teeth when he was about to strike a telling blow; if he had been struck on the chin at such a moment the consequences would have been serious: he was repeatedly warned by the Lieutenant, and then given up as a bad job. The Arab Sheikh would sometimes stroll into the saloon and look on smiling quietly to himself and saying, 'Inglis boxer.' Sometimes he would remain seated in a corner out of the way of the combatants, studying an English newspaper which the Professor had lent him.

'It is wonderful how the Sheikh has got on with his English,' said Harry one day. 'When we left Cairo he could hardly speak a word, now he seems to understand almost everything. Yesterday I heard him in conversation with Uncle Charlie, and when Uncle forgot himself and dropped into English, he replied in English quite naturally—rather queer, wasn't it?'

'You will often find that with foreigners,' replied Dick, as if he were a man of extensive experience. 'Yes, you will often find that in foreigners. When you meet them they say they speak one or two English words, and after a bit you discover that they talk English quite decently. They're more modest than we are, I think. It was like that with old Belieu at home, and after you got to know him you found that he had read Walter Scott's novels in English, and could quote Shakespeare by the yard. If I could talk half as much French as he can English I should think myself a regular swell at it.'

Notwithstanding, Harry, who had heard the Sheikh lapse into good English, still thought it was rather odd.

One day when the boys were tired of the hot deck and the glare of the water, and were seated on the lounge of the saloon, the Sheikh, who had been studying his paper in the corner, turned to Dick with a smile, saying:

'I read the Inglis. It is difficult. How say you this word—"Constituency"—it is the division that choose the senator for the Parliament, is it not? I read not the Inglis well, but I read the face of the Inglis man; it is not so difficult. I read also the hand,' he continued, moving nearer to Dick; and, still smiling softly, he took Dick's hand, which had been resting on the table, and looked closely into his face. 'I read the hand better than the Inglis newspaper.'

He turned Dick's palm upwards, and with the nail of his forefinger delicately followed the lines. 'The lines are not complex,' he said. 'The Inglis boy has the good heart. There is also long life and what you say good fortune. There is a long journey, and the sun shines not always. He shall have friends, but there is also the serpent in the path. See, the lines cross. There is danger, the friend is not always near. Look you, I will show you something.' He closed his eyes and,

pointing to his own breast, said, 'I see not with the eyes, I see here.' Then continued, slowly, 'What do I see? It is great, it is white. It is a temple. I see also the great desert. I see the Inglis boy alone; he is so small in the great, great desert, but he has the good heart; he says there is no danger. What do I see? It is a cloud; it is the dust of many feet. It is the wild black men from the south. But Allah is above all.'

The Sheikh kept his eyes closed whilst he slowly uttered these words, with solemn pauses. The boys were beginning to feel quite creepy. Opening his eyes he laughed a reassuring little laugh, then suddenly looked keenly into the depths of Dick's eyes, and said, 'You have a charm in your pocket. It is a gift. On it is the name of the prophet. Lose it not. Forget it not. It is good in the hour of danger. In the eyes of the men of the desert it is good. It is good in the eyes of the wild men from the south, when they see. It will turn the point of the spear. Inglis boy Dick, forget it not.' He said no more, but folded the newspaper, and left the saloon.

The boys sat looking at each other for some moments after the Sheikh had passed out. At length Dick said, 'What does he mean? He made me feel quite queer when he looked into my eyes like that, and put on that ghostly voice. He's like one of those thought-reading fellows one hears of. Did he mean that thing old Omar gave me—he said it was a gift? How did he know, I wonder? I have never shown it to any one but you, Harry. I wonder how he could know!'

Dick put his hand in his pocket, and drew out the dervish's gift, and turned it about in the palm of his hand. It was an oblong stone, of a dull slaty colour, and flattened on the upper and lower surfaces; a hole was drilled at one end, as if it had been worn on a string or necklet, and on the two flattened sides some Arabic characters were scratched.

'How did he know?' repeated Dick. 'I have not shown it to any one but you—not even to Uncle Charlie, for fear of giving the show away about the dervish.'

'He must have seen it in your hand some time or other—when you took some money out of your pocket, perhaps.'

'I can't say,' said Dick, shaking his head, and trying to recollect.

'He said it is a charm,' said Harry, 'and meant something to the natives, and would protect you, if you got into trouble with them.'

'It looks like a charm, or something of that sort,' said Dick. 'I shall wear it on my watch-chain. He's a strange man—the Sheikh. What's his name—Obed-ben something?'

'Obed-ben-Hesser,' replied Harry. 'He appears very friendly, however, and seems a good sort; but he's a regular mystifier—a conundrum. I give him up.'

But Dick could not give him up. He often found himself recalling the solemn tones of the Arab Sheikh, and puzzling over his words—words half-playful, but evidently with an earnest meaning behind them; and he frequently caught himself looking at the Sheikh and studying his appearance and movements, and at times he would find the Arab's eyes fixed on him with the same expression—the brows gravely lowered, and the lips moving to form some soundless words of admonition.

(Continued on page 90.)



“The Sheikh looked closely into Dick’s face.”



"The Professor led the way in the burning sun."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 87.)

KARNAK at last, and the wonders of Thebes and Luxor. As the *Isis* sailed slowly up the river, scene on scene opened before their eyes. For nine long miles, on both sides of the Nile, stretched the ruins of the ancient capital of Upper Egypt, backed by the long ranges of hills which here become wild and mountainous. A city founded before authentic history began; a city, outside and beyond the dreams of the modern utilitarian mind, built by giants whose colossal conceptions and boundless energy laughed at difficulties, at labour, at expenditure of wealth and human life, who knew no timid prudence, no pigmy calculation of cost; whose minds were bent only on the fulfilment in everlasting stone of their gigantic dreams. There, among the miserable villages of the *malens*, rose magnificent portals and forests of beautiful columns, and richly-decorated obelisks pierced the blue sky; long avenues of statues, gateways of rose-coloured granite, and walls decorated with hundreds of human figures and animals.

Whilst the dahabeeyah lay beside the quay unloading cargo, the Professor and the boys made long excursions into this wonderland. Disdaining the services of donkeys and donkey-boys, and regardless of regular meals, the Professor led the way in the burning sun. The two officers had attached themselves to his party, and it required all their youthful energy and length of limb to keep pace with him. Two or three biscuits in his pocket was all that he required by way of sustenance, and if it had not been for the reminders of his followers these would have been forgotten; but for the everlasting mopping of his brow with his big handkerchief, and an unquenchable thirst, he would have risen superior to this mortal flesh. His companions were very grateful for these weaknesses, which brought him down to the level of ordinary humanity.

They explored the great Temple of Ammon, a mile and a half in circumference, with its twelve great entrances; the roof of its prodigious hall supported by no less than one hundred and thirty-four columns—some of these measuring as much as thirty-four feet round; its granite shrine with the four beautiful obelisks at its entrance. They saw the Temple at Luxor with its peerless entrance, and gazed up in astonishment at its mighty obelisks of rose-coloured granite, towering a hundred feet into the sky. They looked at the sculptured figures of the eastern wing till their eyes were dazed at the maze of human figures—fifteen hundred, Uncle Charlie said—a record of a victory gained by one of the ancient kings over his Asiatic enemies.

They visited the tombs of the kings, which honeycomb the hills, and saw what remains of the curious avenue of sphinxes which ran from Karnak to Luxor. The boys toiled at the heels of Uncle Charlie in the blazing sunshine—their minds a blur of obelisks, temples, and tombs.

Of course they saw the colossal statues of Memnon on the west side of the Nile. They had been among the first objects to catch the boys' attention as they came up the river—two seated figures of gigantic proportions who kept guard over a temple which has long since disappeared. Their heads, shattered by time, rear them-

selves high into the sky some sixty to seventy feet. Weird and monstrous they look in the evening light, their very knees towering high above ordinary buildings: and at night sufficiently grim to inspire the superstitious with fear. It is said that in ancient times one of the statues gave forth a melodious sound, like an *Æolian* harp, but it is not heard now.

'They are misnamed statues of Memnon,' said Uncle Charlie, as they looked up at the twin giants. 'They are in reality statues of the Egyptian King Amenhotep, and stood at the entrance to his temple which has disappeared.'

'What, our Amenhotep?' exclaimed Harry.

'No, not our Amenhotep,' said the Professor, smiling, 'but his father, Amenhotep III.'

They left the city of temples behind, and the good ship *Isis* slid along on the calm waters, leaving the Reis and crew with little or nothing to do, which seemed to suit them to a nicety.

Selim had quite recovered his good temper after making matters even with Dick on the day of the Crocodile scare. It appeared that he had profited by the lesson of the rat-trap, or by Uncle Charlie's little lecture on that occasion, and evinced no disposition toward petty pilfering. His conscience had been touched apparently; or did the fact that all the deck cargo, including the oranges and bananas, had been landed at Karnak, have anything to do with it? When this latter event had taken place, and Dick and Harry saw the cover removed from the hatchway and two of the men pulling the goods about, they were on tenter-hooks lest an examination of the inner recesses should be made in search of some missing article, and it was not until the cover was replaced that they breathed freely again. As before, they took their turns in supplying the wants of the dervish, and made their nocturnal visits to the hold. All went well until one night, shortly after leaving Karnak, a disastrous accident occurred, which 'nearly gave the show away,' as Dick expressed it.

It was Harry's turn that night, and the following morning he did not appear at breakfast. Uncle Charlie moved his chair impatiently, and muttered something about a lazy young rascal. Breakfast was over, and still no Harry. The Professor was getting peppery, for he was very particular about punctuality at meal-times—especially in the mornings. Dick pushed back his chair, an unformed fear bubbling in his mind. 'Shall I go and see, Uncle?' he exclaimed.

But the Professor was before him, and was knocking at Harry's door, and calling irritably: 'Here, Harry! What do you mean by it? It's nine o'clock, and breakfast is over. What in the world—'

The Professor gave the door a push that sent the little brass bolt on the inside flying, and stood contemplating in amazement an empty cabin, a bunk that had not been slept in, a carpet screwed up and flung aside, and two boards removed from the floor, leaving a large hole leading who knows where.

(Continued on page 102.)

SOME CURIOUS STONES.

MANY curious legends are told concerning rocks, boulders, and stones. A large number of these are to be met with along the rugged coasts of Devon and Cornwall, and upon the wide moors, where strange

tales are told concerning the oddly-shaped 'tors' and the great isolated boulders so frequent in the moorland.

Between Dawlish and Teignmouth two great queerly-shaped rocks are pointed out as 'The Parson and the Clerk.' The former leans back against the steep red cliff, while the Clerk stands a little way from the shore, with the wild waves beating fiercely against him. The legend is that they were too fond of feasting and gaiety, and that on a dark winter's night they were riding back late from Teignmouth, and lost their way among the deep winding Devonshire lanes. After a time they reached a large house, which they could not remember having seen before, and were invited to enter by some unknown voice. They went in, and found a number of people gathered round a table. They ate and drank, and joined in the noisy revelry and profane songs of the rest of the party; and when at last they thought it was time to go home, they asked for a guide. One of the company offered his services, so they went out, found their horses, and mounted, going carelessly on till presently they found their steeds splashing through the water, and asked their guide what it meant. Immediately there was a vivid flash of lightning and shrieks of mocking laughter, and for a moment they caught a glimpse of their leader in his real form as a demon—then they were overwhelmed by the waves. Next morning two strangely-shaped rocks appeared on the shore and near them the two horses were wandering on the sands; but 'The Parson and the Clerk' were never seen again!

A stone between Honiton and Sydbury is said to go for a drink at Sydmouth every night, and it is declared that no horse will pass it by without shying or bolting.

In the middle of the river Dart, not very far from Totnes, a big flat stone is pointed out as the place where scolding women were formerly put in the hope of curing their evil tongues. It is said a man once left his wife here, and forgot all about her.

Near St. Levan, in Cornwall, there is a stone which is supposed to foretell the end of the world. St. Levan, who lived here centuries ago, wished to leave some record of his prowess behind him, so one day he struck a large block of granite near his cell with his clenched fist, and split it right down the middle, declaring that when this cleft widens sufficiently to let a loaded mule pass by, the Last Day will be at hand:

'When a mule can ride
Through the Levan Stone,
The world is done!'

Not far away there is a table-shaped stone, where it is said that seven kings once dined, and the wizard Merlin declared that some day a still greater number of monarchs would assemble round it, and then either the Judgment Day or some dire catastrophe would be at hand.

Perhaps the most famous of Cornish rocks is the 'Logan,' or 'Rocking Stone,' so called because it 'logs,' or rocks, for its huge bulk of over ninety tons is so balanced on the top of a steep point of the granite cliffs that a slight touch can move it to and fro. Popularly supposed to be 'The Rocking-chair of the Witch of the West,' a certain Madgy Figgs, it is associated with many queer tales and beliefs. Madgy was said to sit here on stormy winter nights, in order to lure ships to destruction on the cruel rocks below.

It was always said that, though it swayed so readily,

it was impossible to overthrow the Logan Stone; but a young naval officer, named Goldsmith, who was in command of a revenue cutter on this coast, was vexed that any task should be deemed beyond the powers of British seamen, and resolved to prove the contrary! On the 9th of April, 1824, he climbed the cliff with about a dozen of his crew, and between them they contrived to push the stone off its base and send it crashing into a narrow chasm far below. The people of the neighbourhood were so angry when they heard of this foolish exploit, that they complained to the Admiralty, and the Lieutenant was ordered to replace the stone. This was done with great difficulty by the aid of chains, very stout cables, and a number of capstans. When the Logan Stone was safely hoisted to its old position, the men and tackle were used to replace the topmost stone of Lanyon Quoit, another famous rock in the neighbourhood. A Logan Stone at Golear, Yorkshire, rocks no longer, as workmen hacked at it with their tools to find out why it moved.

There are several similar rocking stones in Wales, where there are endless legends about rocks and stones. 'The Lake of Three Grains,' in Merioneth, owes its name to three large rocks which the giant Idris, when sitting enthroned in his lofty seat above ('Cader Idris' means the 'Chair of Idris'), found in his shoe, and flung down here in a passion. The Maen-Lin, huge stones in the Vale of Clwyd, are said to be dangerous to meddle with, as each is supposed to hold an imprisoned spirit. They are believed to have come down from Snowdon in the Ice Age.

Many stones are the legendary quoits, or marbles, with which giants or mythical heroes played. A boulder weighing thousands of tons, and known as 'Rob Roy's Putting-stone,' lies on a moor near Loch Tulla. The Chief is said to have tried to put it from the top of Ben Boran across the valley to the opposite hill. In Ireland many such exploits are accredited to the legendary hero, Finn McCool, or Fionn MacCumbal.

There are curious tales about the mountain in the Highlands known as Ben Arthur, or 'The Cobbler.' The latter name is due to a big boulder on the top of the South peak of the hill, which is split into two sharp peaks. Seen from the valley below on a clear day, this rock bears a certain resemblance to a cobbler bending over a shoe, with his arms extended as he stitches away at the leather. A similar rock on the North peak is said to be his wife 'Jean,' and a white stream that trickles down the steep slope is supposed to be a bowl of milk which the old woman spilt. 'The Herdsmen,' or 'Etive Herds,' are two frowning black rocks on the mountain-side above Glencoe.

In the North of Ireland the form of a giant is pointed out stretched along the ridge of Slieve Foy, near Carlingford Lough. The country folk say it marks the spot where Finn McCool met a Scottish rival, who challenged him to mortal combat after Finn's wonderful exploit of building the Giant's Causeway. (Of course, this hero is the Scottish Fingal.) Finn gaily accepted the challenge, and sallied out along the crest of Slieve Foy to meet his foe. Directly he caught a glimpse of him, he tore up a great rock from the mountain and flung it at the Scot, killing him on the spot; but he was so exhausted after the exploit, that he fell back full-length upon the hill to rest. The stone is pointed out on an opposite hill above Rostrevor; it is known as 'Knock-cree' (hill of my heart), and the hole from which the

gigantic boulder is said to have been torn is also pointed out on Slieve Foy.

At St. John's Well, near Carrigaline, co. Cork, there is a great stone, slightly resembling a human head in shape. According to the peasantry, this is the head of St. John the Baptist turned into stone. In ancient times it was one of the famous 'swearing-stones,' over which oaths and compacts were made by persons standing with their hands on the stone, after which they each scratched a rude cross on the surface with a piece of slate.

While most of these tales relate to very large stones, an odd superstition is connected with some pretty yellow crystals, which are found in the rocks on the North side of Lough Neagh, close to the holy well, where till quite recently a famous 'pattern' was held on June 27th. According to the peasants, these crystals grow in the rocks on Midsummer Eve, and are said to avert evil, and bring all sorts of blessings to a family, provided certain words are repeated while gathering them. This formula is only known to a few persons. As a matter of fact, very curious stones are to be found on the banks of Lough Neagh, and the country folk from time immemorial have believed that, if a stake of holly were driven down into the bottom of the lake and left there for seven years, at the end of that time the part that was sunk in the mud at the bottom of the lake would have turned into iron, the part that was in the water to stone, while the portion above water would still be nothing but holly. The water is not petrifying, but

the legend seems to have arisen from the fact that stones resembling wood in shape and grain are found near the lake. They are petrified wood, indeed, but geologists say they were in existence long before Lough Neagh was formed.

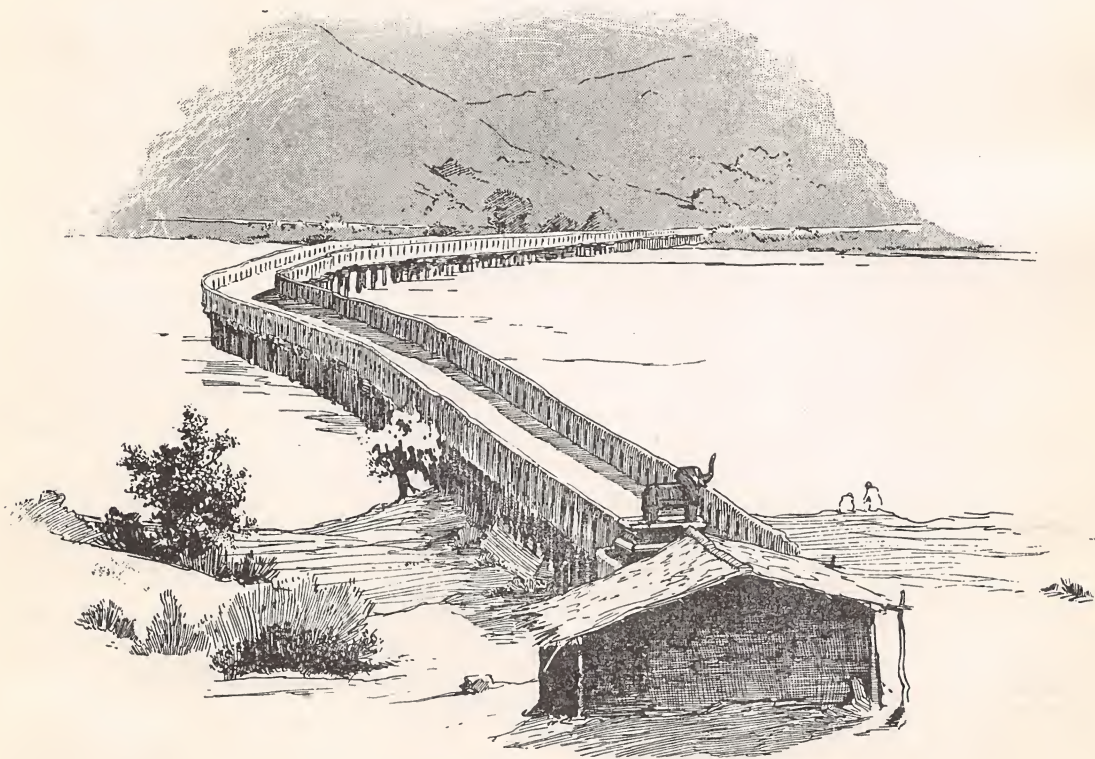
ACROSS THE WATER.

III.—SOME STRANGE BRIDGES IN ASIA.

ON the great continent of Asia many strange and wonderful bridges are to be seen, for there we not only have relics of ancient civilisations, but also some of the most famous examples of modern engineering skill and science.

In India, especially, there are many of the latter, as, during the last century, numerous railway lines have been constructed. These often run through hilly districts, and have to be carried across deep gorges, from one dizzy height to another, and over wide and dangerous rivers.

The rivers of tropical and mountainous countries are, as a rule, very different from those of England, and, instead of running smoothly between their banks, they vary to an extraordinary extent with the season of the year. A stream that at one time is narrow and placid will, during the rainy months, be a wide and rushing torrent, which overflows its shores and sweeps with terrific force against the piles and arches of the bridges which obstruct its course.



The Bridge at Sivasamudrumi, India.

It will easily be understood, therefore, that the work of a bridge-builder in India is no simple matter, for it is almost impossible to calculate beforehand the coming rise of a river. The structures, therefore, have to be so designed that they will not only withstand the ordinary floods of a normal season, but also the terrible inundations that sometimes occur, at intervals of ten, fifteen, or, perhaps, fifty years.

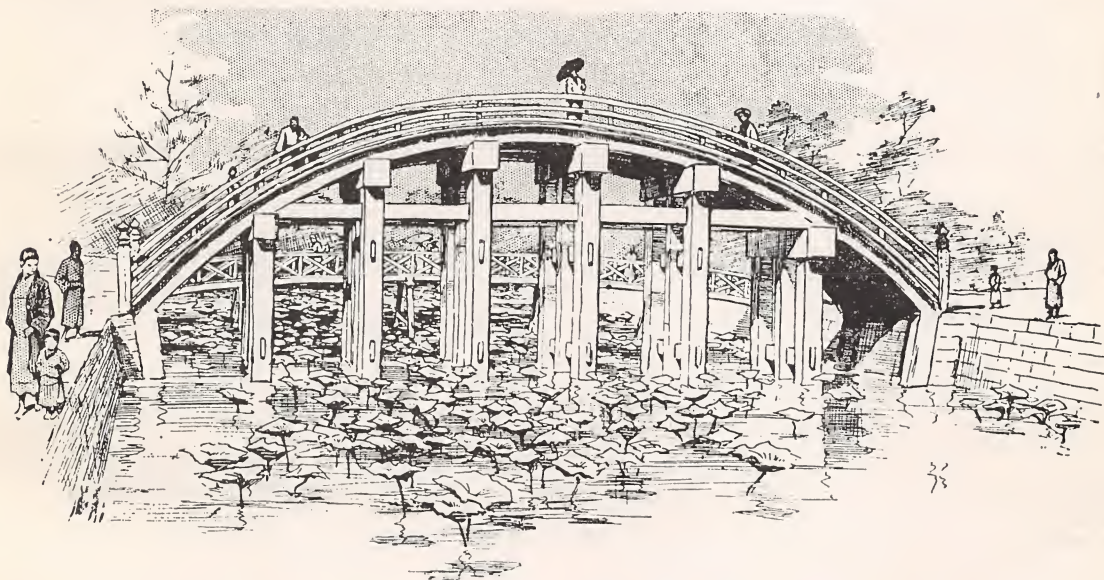
In old days the bridges across rivers in India were often of a temporary character, so that they could be moved during the wet season. There is a bridge of this sort at Ravi, which is dismantled every year from June to August. It is a boat bridge, and the roadway across it is so narrow that two vehicles cannot pass each other.

One of the most wonderful ancient bridges in India is at Sivasamudrum, which is built in the form of a

leading down to the river. There are three towers on this bridge, one at each end and one in the centre, and the whole edifice is decorated with brightly-coloured tiles.

From Persia we go eastward, and crossing Asia and the China Sea come to Japan, and here it is not surprising to find many beautiful bridges. The Japanese are among the most artistic people in the world, and evidences of their exquisite taste and skill are to be seen in many of the quaint and graceful structures that span the rivers and lead up to the shrines and temples.

There is a very picturesque temple bridge at Kioto, made of wood, and with a sloping roof that reminds us of the covered bridges in Switzerland and other parts of Europe. The rails of this bridge are painted red, which is the sacred colour in Japan, and it is a noticeable and most picturesque feature in the landscape, standing



The Rainbow Bridge over the Lotus Pond, Osaka, Japan.

great causeway, and, instead of stretching in a straight line across the river, it bends in the middle like a huge wedge. On one side of the entrance to this bridge is a statue of an elephant with its trunk raised.

There are a number of very beautiful bridges in Persia, and one of these, at Ispahan, has been called by Lord Curzon 'in all probability the stateliest bridge in the world.' This wonderful structure, which is called the Bridge of Ali Verdi Khan, is three hundred and eighty yards long, and is built of solid masonry, with nearly a hundred graceful pointed arches. These support an arcade, or gallery, which is used by the inhabitants of the city as a promenade and lounge.

Not far away, crossing the same river, is another fine bridge, the Pul-I-Khan, which, although less than half the length of the other, is, perhaps, even more interesting and picturesque. It is built in the same way as the Ali Verdi Khan Bridge, with two stories, and is constructed on a platform, which has, on either side, steps

high, as it does, above the green trees and bushes of the gorge which it spans.

One of the most famous of all Japanese bridges is the Sacred Bridge, leading to the temples at Nikko, and crossing the river Daiya. It is made of wood, and is covered with bright red lacquer, which, it is said, preserves the fabric in such a manner that repairs are never needed. On either side of the river are strong stone piers, and these support the bridge, which is built in a most graceful curve.

This bridge is considered sacred, and is only used by priests and pilgrims; the latter, moreover, only being allowed to cross it on two days in the year. There is a tall gate at either end, which on these occasions is opened. This sacred bridge was erected two hundred and fifty years ago, and it is supposed to mark the spot where once Shodo Shonin, a famous Japanese saint, crossed the stream. Shodo, the legend says, was told in a dream to ascend a certain mountain, but, on his journey

thither, he found his way blocked by an impassable ravine. He knelt down and prayed to the gods for help, and then a divine being appeared to him, carrying in his hands two green and blue serpents. These were thrown by the god across the stream, and immediately were transformed into a bridge shaped like a rainbow. The saint passed over, and, as soon as he had done so, the miraculous bridge vanished away. After the wonderful event Shodo made himself a hut, and lived near the bank of the river, and on the spot where he dwelt are now the beautiful temples for which Nikko is celebrated.

The rainbow-shaped bridge is a favourite type with the Japanese, and examples of it may be seen crossing the streams and ornamental lakes in their gardens. There is one of these over the Lotus Pond at Osaka, which is very quaint and picturesque. It is constructed of wood, and, as our illustration shows, the arch is supported by a framework of massive beams.

A. A. METHLEY.

THE QUARRELSOME DOGS.

TWO neighbours' dogs, a big one and a little one, had fallen out. As they lived very near to each other, they were always meeting, and there were frequent encounters, in which the little dog always came off worst. He was plucky, however, and, as is frequently the case, defeats and injuries only served to make him fiercer and more resentful. Whenever he saw his big enemy he went for him, regardless of the consequences to himself. The owners were friendly, and did their best to prevent the dogs fighting, but this was often a difficult task.

The larger dog had been taught to carry his master's stick. One day, when the two men with their dogs met each other in a narrow street, and a fight seemed almost unavoidable, the owner of the bigger dog tried a new plan. Before the dogs could rush at each other, he gave his walking-stick to his own dog. The latter took it, and his sense of duty at once mastered his quarrelsome feelings. He lifted his muzzle in the air, put on a look of disdain, and refused to have anything to do with his little enemy. The latter, finding that his snaps and snarls had no effect, was more easily checked and driven off; and so there was no fight that time, nor on any future occasion when the same method was tried.

THE TREE WITH ONE BEAUTIFUL FLOWER.

I SAW it un'old in my garden,
One flower where no other flower grew,
A rosebud alone in its beauty,
Most lovely in fragrance and hue.
The tree bore no other fair blossom,
It had its own sunshine and shower,
I watched it unfold, for I loved it—
The tree with one beautiful flower.

Near at hand there were trees far more lavish,
Blooms faded, and others came on:
On the stalks there were many blown lilies.
And daisies were white on the lawn.
But this bud had no sister or brother,
Though roses were thick on the bower,
And the bush where it hung in its beauty
Was a tree with one beautiful flower.

And be thy life lik' to that blossom—
If but one lovely grace shall be thine,
Oh, deem not thy days can be wasted,
Nor at thy one talent repine.
How sweet to show forth one fair virtue,
To be gentle and kind hour by hour,
To grow in the world's lovely garden,
A tree with one beautiful flower.

FRANK ELLIS.

'THIS DAY WE SAILED ON.'

ON the 12th of October, 1492, Christopher Columbus, after suffering many perils and hardships, discovered the continent of America.

During his voyage he had many exciting experiences. On one occasion his men mutinied and caused him much anxiety.

On every ship there is a book kept, which is called the log-book, and in this book are recorded all incidents of importance that happen during the voyage, and the number of miles that the vessel makes each day.

One of the most frequent entries in the log-book of Christopher Columbus were five little words which have always seemed to me to possess a pathos and beauty all their own. On the days when nothing of any particular importance happened, he made the simple and hopeful entry, 'This day we sailed on.'

None but a brave man and a man of indomitable spirit would ever have thought of such a form of words.

There must have been times when his hopes sank very low indeed, when things seemed to be against him, and when he wondered whether his great dream of the land beyond the West would be realised.

But he bravely and steadfastly put all such thoughts away from him. And trusting in God, and in his own brave heart, he pushed on his voyage, and could always make the simple and brave record, 'This day we sailed on.'

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS.

'IT'S the second time it's happened this week,' said Nina slowly, 'and I'm not going to stand it any longer.'

Walter thrust his hands into the depths of his trouser pockets, and strode gloomily across to the window. 'Bad enough in any case having two cousins landed on us for a whole term,' he grumbled moodily; 'but when it comes to seeing them go out on our bicycles every half-holiday, as they do now, it's pretty well the limit.'

'If Mother had been at home, I wouldn't have minded saying no,' reflected Nina; 'but we did promise her to share our things with them.'

Walter's brow contracted, and for a moment there was silence; then he turned suddenly and faced his sister. 'Nina, let's give them a jolly good fright. I'm pretty certain I know where they have gone to, because yesterday I heard Barry asking Pat Bircham which was the best place for blackberrying.'

'Well?' asked Nina vaguely. 'What did he say?'

'Trevaston Meadow, and he's going there himself this afternoon. Don't you see? We will get him to bag the bicycles and bring them home, just for fun, and Barry and Rose will think they are stolen.'

'But how will he get them without their seeing him?' faltered Nina, doubtfully.

'Easily. They'll stick them into the hedge, and they'll be much too busy getting blackberries to notice Pat. Won't they get a fright when they think the bikes are stolen! It will jolly well pay them out! Well, I'm off to see Pat now—there's no time to lose.' And seizing his cap in his hand, Walter dashed excitedly from the room.

Somehow the half-holiday that afternoon was a failure. An uncomfortable feeling in her mind spoilt Nina's usual enjoyment of their games, and Walter, quick to see that her heart was not in what they were doing, became moody and irritable, and finally lost his temper altogether.

It was with a feeling of relief that Nina caught sight of Pat's small figure hurrying down the garden path towards them, and she ran forward eagerly.

'I say, I'm awfully sorry,' began the little boy, breathlessly. 'I have punctured one of the tyres. It went off with such a bang!'

'Never mind, let me see it,' replied Nina, as he turned and led the way up the path. 'It doesn't much matter.'

A minute later, as they stood before the bicycles, Pat was looking at her in real alarm, for a sudden expression of horror had come into her face, and she clutched his arm fearfully.

'Pat—what *have* you done? Those aren't our bicycles! You've brought the wrong ones!'

'They were the only ones there,' faltered Pat, after a moment's awful pause.

'But they're grown-up people's bicycles!' exclaimed Nina. 'What shall we do? How *could* you have made such a mistake?'

The two stared at each other in blank consternation, then Nina suddenly turned away.

'Let's find Walter and ask him,' she said; and a moment later they were racing headlong down the path that led to the orchard. They soon descried Walter's flying figure darting about amongst the trees, and in a minute Nina had grasped the situation.

'He has left the gate open, and let the chickens out!' she exclaimed. 'We must stop them from getting into the garden. There'll be an awful row if Connolly finds out.' And picking up a long stick that lay in the grass near by, she soon forgot the anxiety about the bicycles in the excitement of hunting a dozen or more straying chickens into the safety of their wire run.

A quarter of an hour had elapsed before the door was shut on the last feathered fugitive, and Nina, suddenly remembering the bicycles that had been left in the drive, began to pour out a breathless and rather incoherent explanation to Walter. The trio were making their way up the garden path, and they hastened their footsteps as they neared the house.

'We must take them back at once,' Pat was saying. 'Whoever they belong to will think they are stolen. Nina!—he stopped suddenly as they rounded a corner of the house—they aren't there! They have gone!'

'Connolly must have taken them to the stables,' said Nina in a quick, frightened voice. 'They can't have been stolen.'

'Why not?' Walter glanced at the gate that stood wide open a few yards distant. 'I should think it is quite likely,' he added, unevenly.

The ten minutes that followed seemed like so many hours to the three children, as they ran hither and thither, searching vainly in every direction for the missing machines.

It was Pat who at last suggested the police station. 'We had better all go and explain,' he said.

Rather reluctantly, Nina and Walter followed him towards the gate.

'How stupid it will all sound when we tell them!' whispered the little girl to her brother. 'Everybody will have to know about it now.'

She stopped suddenly, as a bicycle came whirling through the gate, and looking up, the three saw Rose's smiling face above the handle-bars.

'It's all right—Barry has taken them back!' she explained breathlessly, as she jumped to the ground.

'How did you know?' gasped Nina.

Rose leant her bicycle against the hedge, and began pushing the tangle of curls from her hot face.

'We weren't going blackberrying at all. We borrowed the bicycles because we wanted to ride into Shanley, and when we had gone a little way I had to come back for something we had forgotten to take with us. While I was getting it I heard you talking to Pat in the yard. You—you were telling him about taking the bicycles from Trevaston Meadow.'

She paused hesitatingly, and Nina stepped forward with glowing cheeks.

'It was hateful of us,' she began awkwardly.

'Well, we were nearly as hateful,' put in Rose quickly, 'because after that I simply scorched after Barry; and then we thought we would ride to Trevaston Manor, and let Pat take the bicycles—just for fun.'

'It would have jolly well scored us off if you had,' put in Walter humbly.

'Well, we didn't, because when we got there we found two people rushing about, looking everywhere in the hedge, so we went straight up and asked them if they had lost their bicycles, and of course they had.'

'What did you say?' asked Nina and Walter in a breath.

'Barry explained somehow. I didn't. He said they had been taken away by mistake, and he'd go and fetch them back. So he rode here and found them in the drive. He never thought, till he had taken them away, that you'd think they'd been stolen, so I have come now to tell you. He's mending the puncture.'

'Where were you when you heard Walter talking to me in the yard?' asked Pat, suddenly stepping forward.

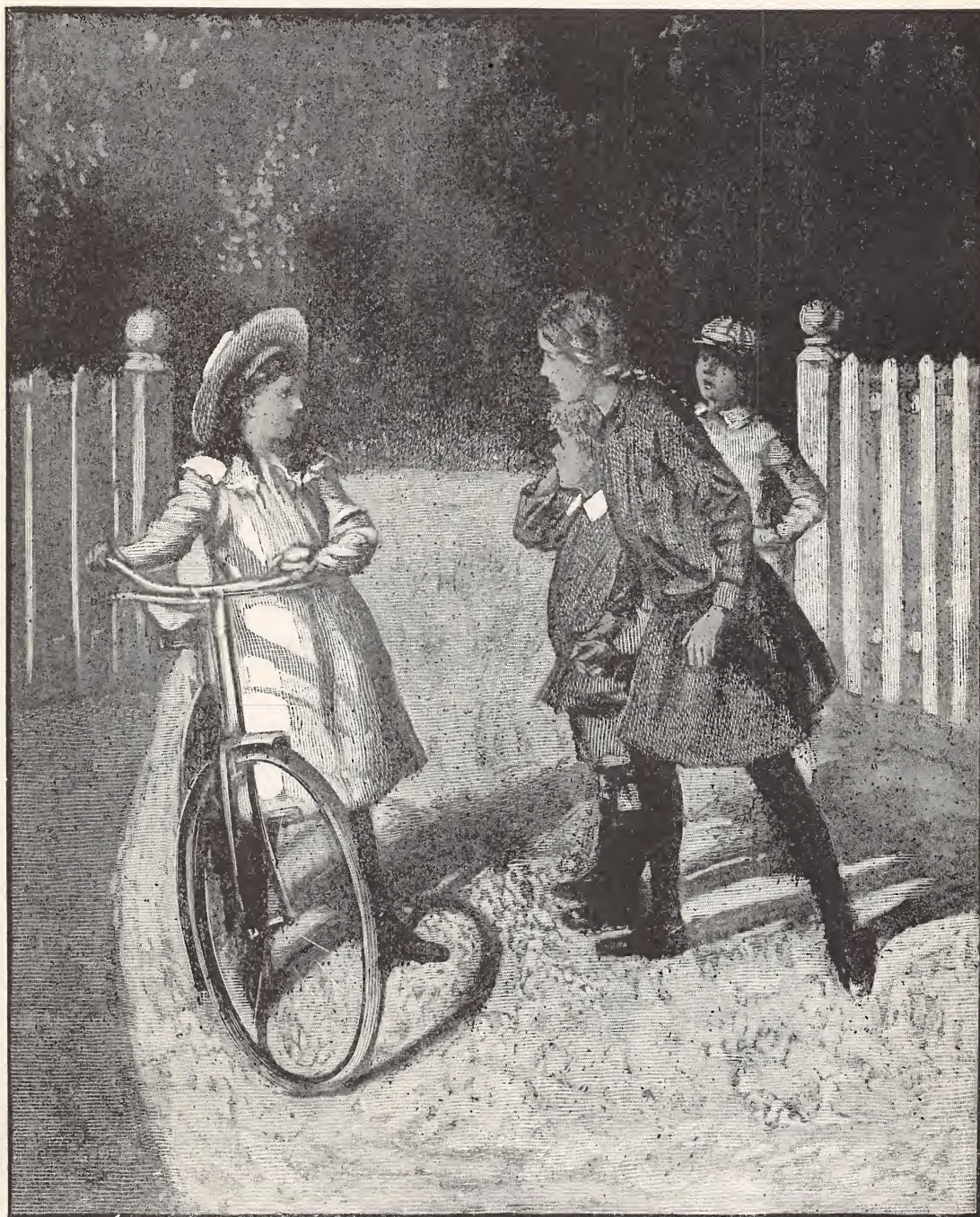
Rose's eyes fell, and twisting a handkerchief uncomfortably in her fingers, she hesitated before replying.

'I was in the shed,' she said at last, 'measuring something in the guinea-pig hutch. Barry's making you a new one for a present, only we didn't want you to know till next week. The carpenter at Shanley is helping him—that's why we have borrowed your bicycles so often to ride there.'

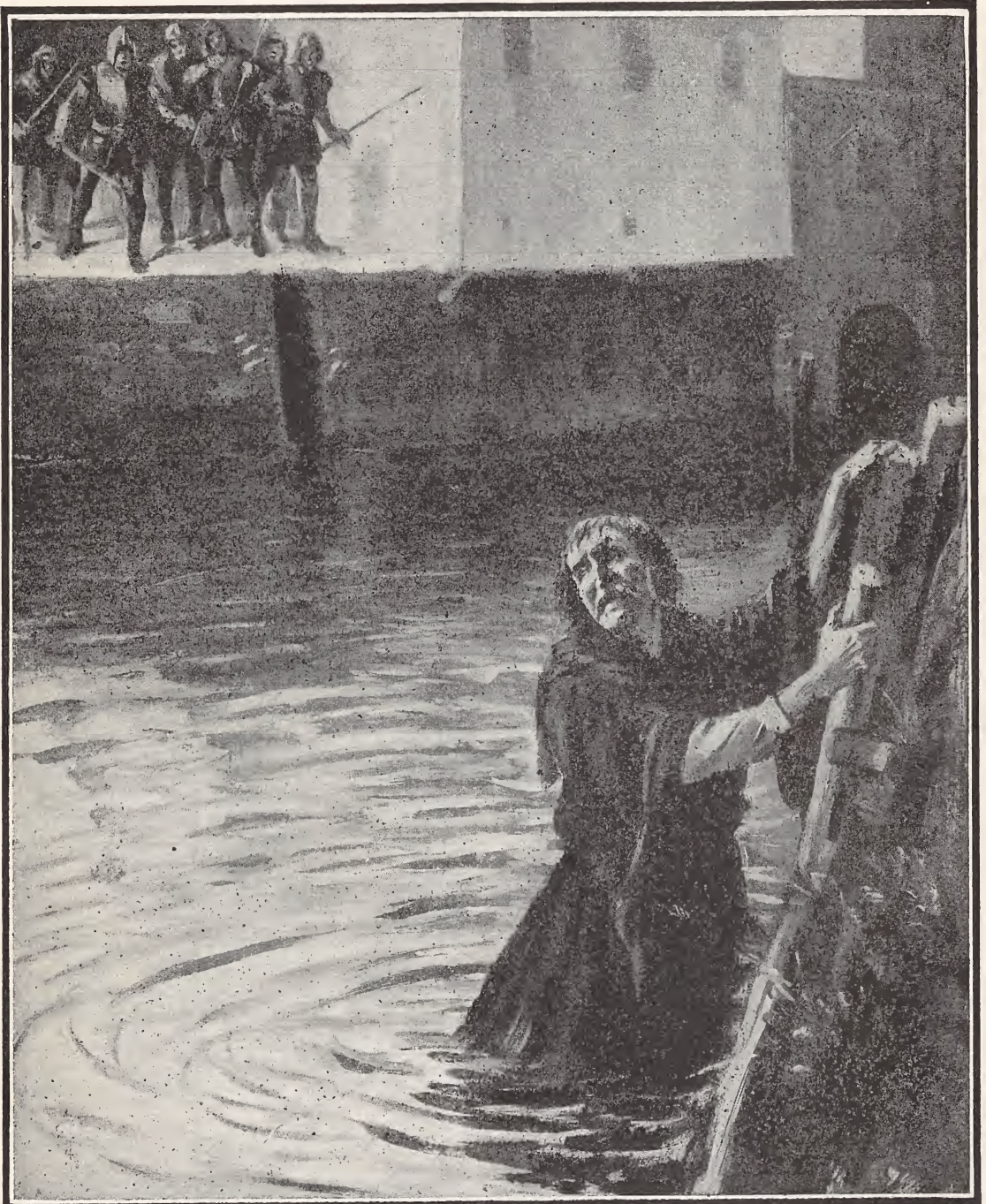
Walter and Nina looked at each other rather shamefacedly, but before they could speak the sound of whirling wheels outside the gate was followed by a shout of greeting from Barry.

'You have made us feel jolly well ashamed of ourselves,' began Walter, as his cousin joined the little group in the drive. 'It was most awfully decent of you, especially—'

'Oh, rot!' interrupted Barry eloquently; then he held out his hand, on which a shilling gleamed brightly in the sunlight. 'The chap gave me that for mending the puncture. Wasn't it sporting of him! I have been thinking—we will hire a boat next Saturday, and have a ripping afternoon.'



“‘It’s all right!’ she explained breathlessly, as she jumped to the ground.”



“ Their commander only escaped by disguising himself as a monk and swimming across the dyke.”

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

The Story of some famous Sieges.

II.—BRUGES.

A QUAIN, sleepy old town, with wide, deserted squares, placid canals, and cobbled, grass-grown streets; a town where there are exquisite pictures hidden away in the ancient churches, where carts are drawn by dogs, and where the musical chimes from the tall belfry ring out every hour by day and night—that is what Bruges means to many people; and it is strange to remember that, long ago, it was one of the largest and most prosperous cities in Europe, and that stirring events, gorgeous pageants, and terrible tragedies have taken place within its walls.

Certainly, the Bruges of the twentieth century is a very different place from the 'Northern Venice' of seven hundred years ago; for then it was at the height of its grandeur, and outdid even its powerful rival, Ghent, in wealth and importance.

In the thirteenth century the country that is now called Belgium, but which was then made up of a number of separate provinces, was invaded by the French under the celebrated king, Philip Augustus, and a number of towns, including Bruges, were captured. For many years the city remained in the hands of the conquerors; but at last, in the summer of 1302, an attempt was made to expel the French garrison. This was done; but the citizens were not strong enough to follow up their first success. The foreign soldiers returned, and the place was threatened with severe punishment.

The French party in Bruges at this time were called 'Lelaerts,' or 'Lilies,' after the fleur de lys of royal France; and the Flemings took the name of 'Clauwaerts,' or 'Claws,' and adopted as their emblem a picture of the lion of Flanders tearing the lilies to pieces.

A second effort was made to throw off the foreign yoke, and this time it met with fearful success. The 'Claws,' to the number of seven thousand, entered the city, and at the appointed time rose against their hated masters. They chose as their password the phrase, 'Schild ende Vriendt,' meaning 'Shield and Friend,' knowing well that the Flemish language is difficult to French lips. Whoever could not pronounce the password correctly was attacked and killed; and it is said that more than three thousand perished, while their commander only escaped by disguising himself as a monk and swimming across the dyke with which the town was then surrounded.

This massacre was called, 'The Matins of Bruges,' and nearly a hundred and fifty years later it was followed by another and very similar tragedy.

On this second occasion the citizens were in open revolt against their feudal ruler, Philip, Duke of Burgundy, who was also Count of Flanders.

Philip determined to punish his turbulent subjects, and marched against Bruges with an army; but the burghers, knowing and fearing his intention, sent a deputation to meet him outside the gate, with a request that he would enter the city alone, or accompanied only by a few knights and servants.

The Duke haughtily refused this demand, and forced his way through the gate, followed by his troops; but immediately he was met by hostile crowds, who

thronged into the streets and market-place and attacked anyone who dared to show him signs of respect.

As the disturbance increased, the Burgundian archers were ordered to fire upon the citizens, and then a fierce fight began. Philip and his men retreated to the gate, only to find that it had been closed and barred, while the drawbridge was raised. Many were killed and wounded; but Philip, in the end, escaped with his life, being helped by some loyal burghers, who drew the bolts of the gate and allowed him to pass through.

'The Vespers of Bruges' (for that was the name given to this revolt) happened on Whit Tuesday, in the year 1437; but the triumph of the citizens over their lord was not destined to last long, and terrible punishment and humiliation were in store for them.

Philip was not a man to forgive lightly, nor to permit any disloyalty among his subjects; and he now made up his mind to starve Bruges into complete submission. The surrounding country and some of the towns, including Ghent, helped him in his design, and a strict blockade was established, which stopped the trade of Bruges entirely, and prevented any provisions being taken into the city.

For three months the siege continued, and the sufferings of the unfortunate inhabitants increased day by day; but they held out bravely, and it was not until twenty-four thousand had perished that they decided to surrender.

Even then the Duke of Burgundy was not satisfied; and he decreed that, on the occasion of his next visit to the town, the principal citizens should go out to meet him with bare feet and bare heads. Three miles from the gates they were to kneel before him and present the keys for his acceptance. This humiliation took place as arranged, in the year 1440.

Bruges passed lightly through the perils and trials of the great revolt against Spanish rule in the sixteenth century; but the following despatch, which is preserved among the English State Papers, shows that on one occasion, at least, it narrowly escaped the terrible fate that overtook so many of its sister towns. The letter is dated July 8th, 1579, and runs as follows:—'At Bruges an attempt was discovered to put the town in great danger. . . . Thereupon the magistrates called in the Scots who were with Monsieur de la Noire by whose help, thank God, the town was saved from the very smallest murder or pillage. This was a great service to the country.'

A. A. METHLEY.

WHAT SMITH MINOR THINKS.

WHAT'S the use of these silly exams.,
Which masters compel us to take?
One swots and one grinds and one crams;
But to do so is quite a mistake.

Where is Venice? I'm sure I don't know!
You can always look up on a map,
There's no need to worry me so—
It's really rough luck on a chap!

Who was Simon de Montfort? Indeed
I know not, nor yet do I care.
If they'd asked me the best place to feed
I could answer—but this isn't fair!

If you don't know the source of the Rhone
An atlas will tell you at once;
Yet because a few things are not known
These masters declare I'm a dunce!

Look at Latin! Why, what is the use
Of learning a language that's dead?
Of brains 'tis a shocking abuse
To keep all that stuff in one's head!

At Arithmetic now take a look;
Why learn every measure and weight?
They're all written down in the book.
'Tis a subject I thoroughly hate!

As for French, I would sooner be dead
Than to rubbish like that be a slave.
If the French all learnt English instead,
Just look at the time it would save!

There are Science and Algebra, too—
They don't seem the least bit of good;
There's far too much writing to do,
I'd abolish them all, if I could!

By gad, I've a plan, I may say,
(Not, of course, that I'm anxious to shirk)
By which I can quite do away
With the need for the least bit of work.

It is simply that if all the men
In the world gave up working at once,
If no one knew anything, then
They couldn't say I was a dunce!

A PROPHECY THAT CAME TRUE.

WHEN William Blake, the famous artist and poet, was fourteen years old, his father determined to put him with a first-rate engraver, in order that he might learn his art. After making inquiries, he discovered that Ryland an artist of great talent who had studied in France and had been appointed engraver to the King—was considered a most skilful craftsman. So young Blake was taken by his father to see Ryland. The great man received them with all kindness; he was famous for his winning manners and the confidence he universally inspired. It was therefore not a little astonishing to the boy's father when, after the interview, his son objected strongly to his being apprenticed to Ryland. 'Father,' said the strange boy, 'I don't like the man's face; it looks as if he will live to be hanged!'

Twelve years after the boy's obstinate refusal, Ryland committed forgery on the East India Company, for which the penalty in those days was death. He was the last man to be hanged at Tyburn.

THE SOLDIER'S DOG.

From the French.

AT the beginning of the year 1812, Jean-Marie, a French shepherd-lad, was taken to serve his time as a soldier. In the days of Napoleon I. that was a serious matter indeed! Jean-Marie bade farewell to his sorrowing parents and friends; he took a last look at

his home, the garden, and the sheepfold. Then, with tear-filled eyes and sad heart, he tramped resolutely away.

He had not gone far when his dog, 'Fairon,' came running after him. Jean tried to make him go back. He pointed, he coaxed and threatened the animal—even flung stones at him—but all in vain. It really seemed as though the dog thought, 'You are going into danger. My place is with you. I am coming too.'

The conscript, who loved Fairon, was touched by this obstinate devotion. 'Come, then!' he said at last. 'You will remind me of my home, the farm, and the sheep. If you are with me, I shall not feel quite so lonely or so sad. Come along, good old fellow!'

Fairon leaped up joyously, shook his rough, red coat (he was by no means a beauty), then sobered down, and trotted contentedly at his master's side.

Some days later, in the barrack-yard at T—, while the raw recruits were being drilled under the eye of their Colonel, Fairon interrupted the proceedings by rushing at his master—nearly knocking him over—and barking violently.

'What is that?' asked the Colonel severely.

'That, sir, replied Jean, respectfully, 'is a dog.'

'No doubt; but *whose* dog?'

'Mine, sir,' said Jean-Marie. 'His name is Fairon. I am a shepherd, and this is the dog who helps me in my work.'

'And do you suppose that the Government is going to feed him?'

'I will feed him, sir. I will share my rations with him.'

'Can't allow it,' said the Colonel. 'If I did, every soldier in the regiment would be bringing his pet animal, and we should have a nice collection of dogs, cats, parrots, and monkeys! Give away your dog, lose him, poison him, drown him! Do what you like with him, but never let me see him again, or it will be the worse for you!'

Jean-Marie did not know what to do. If he disobeyed the Colonel's order, he would get into dreadful trouble. On the other hand, he felt that for him to kill his faithful friend Fairon would be a horrible crime. Then he thought of a possible way out of the difficulty. He tied up the dog in an unused shed.

Every night, Jean would steal away, carrying food to the prisoner. He talked to him, and told him that he must be a good, wise, quiet dog. And it really seemed as if Fairon understood his master's warnings, for—wonderful to tell—he *did* keep quiet, though his captivity must have been very hard to bear.

Fairon soon regained his freedom, for, the Emperor having declared war against Russia, Jean-Marie's regiment received its marching orders. It left T— on a chilly March morning. The sky was dark and threatening, the ground was covered with hoar-frost. Everything was about as dismal as it could be. The old soldiers were grave and silent, the young ones sang songs with voices that often broke and failed. All knew well that for many of them there might be no return from this journey. Perhaps the only happy creature amongst them was Fairon. Restored to liberty, invigorated by the frosty air, he rushed hither and thither, gambolling and barking. He was no longer in any danger. Amongst the crowd of dogs which followed, and came sniffing around the cooking-pots of the camp, he attracted no particular attention. The Colonel never dreamed of his



"He pointed, he coaxed, he threatened—but all in vain."

orders having been disobeyed; besides, he had now something else to think of.

The brave animal went all through the Russian campaign. He entered Smolensk at the heels of Napoleon. In the midst of a heavy hail of shells, he threw himself—far in advance of his regiment—into the redoubts of Borodino. He wandered, with his nose in the air, through the streets of Moscow.

Then came the terrible retreat. Starving, dying of cold, harassed by the Cossacks, pursued by wolves, the unhappy French soldiers dragged themselves slowly and miserably towards their own country. At each halting-place, immense numbers of sick, wounded, and dead men

were left behind. Fairon, very thin, with drooping ears, walked sadly behind Jean-Marie, and at night, when the army camped amidst the snow, the dog lay on his master's feet, trying so to keep them warm.

(Concluded on page 106.)

A NIGHT OF FRIGHT.

RAYMOND, a Swiss chamois-hunter, had taken his young friend, Louis, out with him for a day's hunting. Each man carried a gun, and had a small hatchet stuck into his belt.

It was a beautiful autumn day. Louis enjoyed his



"The bear tried to climb the tree."

outing none the less that they did not see any chamois. He did not care for killing the poor animals. Raymond, however, to whom hunting was a matter of business, was greatly disappointed.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, the two men began to think of returning. As they were passing through a wood, Raymond suddenly recollected a meadow not far off, where chamois often went to feed. Though

there was little chance of finding any at this late hour, the hunter said he would go and look, leaving Louis in ambush to keep watch. If Raymond did not return within half an hour, Louis was to descend the mountain.

Under the trees, it was already nearly dark. Left alone, Louis, feeling tired and rather nervous, went and stood beneath a fir-tree which had lower branches than the others. Half an hour passed. He was leaving the spot to go home, when a rustling sound, too loud to be caused by the movements of a chamois, made him step back to his tree. The next moment there appeared a huge bear!

Louis fired his gun, but only wounded the bear's ear. The big, roaring beast rushed at him. Flinging away his gun, he scrambled up the tree. The bear, standing on his hind-legs, placed his fore-paws on the trunk, but Louis was seated on a strong branch several feet above the paws.

The bear tried to climb the tree. When he came near Louis chopped at the paws with his hatchet. Being in too great a hurry, he did not hurt them much, but the bear dropped to the ground, where, howling and growling, he walked round and round the tree.

Then he had a brilliant idea. Since he could not get up to his prey, he would bring his prey down to him. He would dig up the tree by its roots! With nose and paws, he began to dig.

It is said that a bear never fails through lack of perseverance. *This* bear persevered all night! Happily, the tree, being firmly rooted, gave him a lot of trouble. Louis could not see his enemy, but it was horrible to hear him digging away in the dark. Every minute seemed an hour.

Morning found the bear still at work. The tree tottered. Louis thought that his last moment had come. Then, all at once, the bear ceased to dig; he stood sniffing and listening. Louis heard a distant sound. It came nearer; he heard his own name. The bear understood that help was at hand for his captive. With one regretful upward glance at Louis, he disappeared into the wood.

Five minutes later, Raymond was on the spot. Louis came down unhurt, though the tree toppled over before he had quite reached the ground. E. D.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 90.)

ASTONISHMENT is a very mild word for the expression written on the Professor's countenance. 'What does this mean?' he exploded. He was down on the floor the next moment, peering into the opening, then thrust one leg in, as if to go down.

'Let me go, Uncle,' cried Dick. 'I'm smaller than you are,' and Dick squeezed through and dropped as if he knew where he was, and had been there before. Ducking his head he took two steps to the right, and he then saw what had happened. Harry had not been sufficiently careful of the rotten flooring, and had plumped through into the hold. Dick went on his knees. 'Harry, Harry, are you there?' he called.

A faint voice came from below: 'Is that you, Dick? I have done it this time. I fell through and hurt my foot, and have been here all night.'

Dick whispered down the hole, 'Uncle has found it out. He's in your cabin; there will be no end of a row. Is Omar there?'

'Yes. He's been sitting by me all night, rubbing my ankle. I can't stand.'

'Get him to lift you on his shoulders, and see if I can pull you up,' said Dick. 'That's it. Now put your arms round my neck.'

With a heave, Dick had him up and carried him to the spot where the Professor's puzzled face showed through the cabin floor.

'He has hurt his foot, Uncle,' said Dick. 'Can you lift him up?'

Uncle Charlie bent down and got hold of Harry beneath the arms, lifted him and laid him on his bunk. Dick was beside them in a moment, fussing round nervously, and trying to find something to say that would smooth matters down.

'Not a word!' Uncle Charlie exclaimed. 'Let me see what damage is done.'

The boot and stocking were taken off and the swollen foot carefully examined.

'A sprain,' the Professor said. 'You lie there the rest of the day. Fetch him some breakfast, Dick.'

Harry ate some bread-and-butter and drank a cup of tea with the expression of one under a cloud. Dick looked on gloomily and fidgeted his feet. The breakfast finished in silence, the Professor, with great deliberation, placed the cup and saucer on the plate, and that on the stand beside the bunk, as if he were making some serious experiment in chemistry, then turned on Dick with the words, 'Now tell me all about it.'

Dick fidgeted; the Professor waited.

Among the very few things that were written down in Dick's mind as impossible was—a lie. He must tell all, and trust to Uncle Charlie's kind heart to keep the secret of the stowaway; so out it was blurted—the whole tale, right from the beginning on the Mokattam Hills.

When all was told, Uncle Charlie still sat silent on the edge of the bunk. At last he spoke slowly: 'This is a difficult situation you have placed me in. I hardly know what to do. An escaped prisoner—aiding a prisoner to escape is a serious offence, I can tell you. I fear I ought to give him up to the authorities when we reach Assuan.'

'Don't, Uncle!' said Dick. 'Don't!' implored Harry, and he laid a hand on Uncle Charlie's arm and turned a woeful face towards him.

Dick's face now dropped to a heavy, bulldog expression, as if brought to bay. 'He's not a criminal, Uncle,' he said in a dry voice. 'He's a prisoner of war, taken fighting for his country. If there's an English prisoner now fretting his life out in the Soudan, we should be glad to hear of any one helping him to escape. We should be proud to shake hands with the man that did it, we should—Don't do it, Uncle! Let the poor fellow get back to his own country and his own people.'

Uncle Charlie sat for a long time in silence, with bent head and puckered brow; then he said, 'Dick, I shall take no steps whatever in this matter. I shall keep your secret. I hope I am doing right,' and he left the cabin.

Harry remained the whole of that day in his bunk,

not so much on account of the injury to his foot, which was not very serious, and he had one good one left on which to hobble about, but from a feeling that an act of penance was due from him. He was not clear as to whether or no he had offended against the laws of his country; but he saw that they had got Uncle Charlie into a dilemma, and he was quite sure he had made an ass of himself by tumbling down the hold, so he remained a voluntary prisoner that day; the next he forgave himself, and appeared on deck. He made vague replies to the inquiries of the young officers concerning his foot, and before the day was out had almost forgotten which one it was.

They were now nearing Assuan, where the river divides and flows round the green island of Elephantine. There were signs of great activity on the river and the landing-place, for Assuan was occupied by a strong reserve force of the Egyptian army, preparing for the advance into the Soudan. The wonderful irrigation works were not yet commenced—the great dam at Assuan and Asyut—the huge reservoirs which store the equatorial rains for the constant irrigation of the land by a system of canals, were ideas existing only in the brains of the engineers.

The boys had here to say farewell to the two genial young officers. There would be no more boxing when they were gone, and their loss would be felt. It was the intention of the two lieutenants to spend some days at Assuan, before going on to Wady Halfa, and pick up what knowledge they could of the situation. They were quite ignorant as to the practical side of military operations on a large scale, and were eager to exchange their theory for hard facts.

'Good-bye. Take care of yourselves,' they said, as they shook hands with Dick and Harry. 'We shall knock up against you again one of these days.'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE two boys felt quite lonely at leaving the young officers behind at Assuan, but the excitement of ascending the First Cataract of the Nile left no space for other thoughts. Uncle Charlie had paid a visit to the Governor on shore to make some necessary arrangements for this undertaking, and it now appeared that the navigating of vessels up the Cataract was a monopoly in the hands of a certain Sheikh of the neighbourhood and his followers, who in the season made a pretty penny in this way; and so when the *Isis* left Assuan this Sheikh and half-a-dozen of his men were squatting on the after-deck and had virtually taken command of the dahabeeyah for the time being. The Sheikh, a flat-nosed elderly gentlemen, almost coal-black, and wearing a most gorgeous shawl turban, sat smoking his pipe apart from his followers.

Assuan and the island of Elephantine, which lies opposite, were left behind; and the *Isis* glided among a succession of the most enchanting little islands. One of the Sheikh's Nubian followers stood at the helm, and all looked eagerly for signs of the first rapid. Now there was a stir among the men, and right ahead was seen the rush of water down a rocky slope; up this the dahabeeyah must climb.

'But how?' the boys asked themselves. The answer came almost at the same instant. The Sheikh of the Cataract shouted, and as if by magic the rocky banks swarmed with natives who dashed into the water,

gesticulating and shouting. They carried coils of rope, which were made fast on board the dahabeeyah, whilst other ropes were taken from the *Isis* to the nearest island, and a double file of sinewy blacks hauled her by sheer force of brawn through the surf and up the rushing slope.

It was a scene of great excitement, and the boys stood with parted lips and amazed countenances watching the dancing natives, who at another signal raised their voices in a barbaric chant, and hauled, and hauled again; and so the great boat went slowly and steadily up the slope and swung over on the other side into calm water. After a well-earned rest this process was repeated up a still more difficult ascent, and yet another; then the *Isis* was securely moored for the night in a sheltered pool, the natives disappearing to their villages as magically as they had burst on the scene.

At dawn the next morning the Sheikh of the Cataract and his Nubians were at work again, double-hauling the *Isis* up the next rapid. When the sun was well up the air became oppressively hot, so hot that the boys seemed as if they could take little interest in the exciting work; and the wild scenery of the Cataract—its palm-crowned islands, its rocks fantastically piled, its blue, glassy floods moving smoothly but swiftly by, side by side with tracks of water thrown into turmoil, foaming and swirling among the boulders and over half-hidden rocks—raised scarcely any emotion; they wandered from place to place on deck, vainly trying to get a breath of air.

By midday the dahabeeyah had made about two-thirds of the passage of the Cataract and was moored in a sheltered place for a rest, when, from some unaccountable reason, the Sheikh and his Nubians seemed to slacken in their work. It could not have been the heat, for that tried them not at all. Some whim, or probably something which he thought an omen of ill-luck, affected the Sheikh equally with his men, and they seemed resolved on a general 'strike.'

Uncle Charlie reasoned with his Majesty of the Cataract, but he only smiled and shrugged his shoulders. Then the Reis took him in hand, and seemed from his tone and gestures to be telling him some unpleasant home-truths. The Sheikh retorted in the same strain, then flew into a passion, jumped into his boat, and left the *Isis*, taking his men with him.

There was nothing for it but to stop where they were till it pleased the despot of the Cataract to return and finish his work, which probably he would do the next morning. Selim now served lunch, which was taken on deck, as the saloon was far too stuffy. The cook had fallen sick and had to be left behind at Assuan, and Selim reigned in his stead.

The Reis, from his manner, did not seem to like the appearance of the weather. He closely scrutinised the boat's moorings, grumbling all the while at the pilot's desertion, and held a consultation with Uncle Charlie. Then he sent three men ashore to make the moorings doubly secure. The boys had made up their minds to go ashore, too, but waited till it became a little cooler. They were not more than a mile from the large village of Mahatta, so they learnt, the twin port of Assuan beyond the Cataract, where boats from the Sudan land their merchandise to be taken on camels to Assuan for transshipment; an interesting place where Egypt and Nubia meet, and a busy rendezvous of different races.

(Continued on page 110.)



“The rocky banks swarmed with natives, who dashed into the water.”



“‘How did you discover me, my brave fellow?’ he said.”

THE SOLDIER'S DOG.

(Concluded from page 100.)

ONE night, the regiment lost its way while searching for a village, in which it had been hoped the men might find shelter. It was very dark. The north wind was so sharp, and the cold so great, that the fingers of the soldiers froze to their guns, and icicles formed themselves on their hair and moustaches. The officers shouted their orders, but in the darkness the companies were parted one from the other. Some poor fellows, too weak to struggle further, fell in the snow, and were left to die by the teeth of wolves or the intense cold.

At length, towards ten o'clock, the greater part of the regiment came to a large, abandoned farm. Worn out, chilled through and through, the Frenchmen crept into the house, and, without sufficient strength even to eat their rations of frost-blackened bread, they sank down on the floor, lying side by side, wishing for nothing else in the world but rest and sleep.

But presently an old captain, suddenly raising himself on his elbow, said, 'Men, where is the Colonel?'

The men looked sadly at one another. None had seen the Colonel for some time.

'He must have been overcome by the cold, and have fallen on the road without our seeing him,' said an old grenadier.

'If that is the case,' said a sergeant, 'we shall never see him again. Ah, this wretched war!'

There was silence. The Colonel was well liked, and every one was sorry.

'Can't we do anything, my men?' presently asked an officer. 'Let us go back and look for the Colonel. Who will volunteer to go with me?'

The soldiers hesitated.

'I would willingly go,' said one, 'in spite of fatigue, frost, and wind. But *where* should we look for him? What could we do without lights or guides? Why, we do not even know how we got here. It would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.'

'The marks of our footsteps might guide us,' said some one.

'No, for by now no trace of them would remain in the fresh snow.'

Then Jean-Marie rose to speak. 'Who will follow me?' he asked. 'I will undertake to find the Colonel.'

'How will *you* find him?' cried everybody.

'My dog will lead us to him. But it is a pity that we have nothing belonging to the Colonel to show him. That would make his task easier, and —'

'Wait a moment,' interrupted an orderly. 'The Colonel gave his things into my charge; they are here in my knapsack. See! this is his linen.'

He held up two handkerchiefs, and a rag which might once have been a shirt.

Less than an hour later, the Colonel, who, unconscious but still breathing, had been found in the snow, was resting, well wrapped up in cloaks, at the farm. In order to make a fire for him, the soldiers had taken rafters from the ceiling and balusters from the staircase. Revived by the warmth, he soon opened his eyes. When he found himself in shelter, surrounded by his men, he thought at first that he was dreaming.

'But how did you discover me, my brave fellows?' he said, by-and-by.

'We did not find you,' replied Jean-Marie. 'We could not have done it.'

'Who did, then?' asked the Colonel.

'The dog.'

'What dog?'

'My dog. Do you remember? Fairon, whom you ordered me to get rid of.'

'So you disobeyed me and kept the animal? Well! well! We will settle that little matter when we get back to France—if ever we *do* get there.'

There were yet many hardships to be undergone, but, in the end, both the Colonel and Jean-Marie (with his dog) had the happiness to reach their own country. All that remained of the regiment—a mere handful—was again quartered in the barracks at T—.

A month after the arrival of the soldiers, the Colonel sent for Jean-Marie.

'You still have your dog?' demanded the officer.

'I have—and yet I have not.'

'Give me a plain "Yes" or "No."'

'Yes.'

'Where are you hiding him?'

'In the shed at the end of the yard.'

'Your possession of the animal is contrary to regulations, therefore —'

'Oh, sir, pray do not part us!'

'Therefore, I say, as you have been wounded —'

'I received three sword-cuts at Bérésina.'

'And as you suffer from rheumatism —'

'Through our encamping on the ice.'

'And because I do not wish to part you and your faithful companion, I have obtained your discharge. So now, my good friend, you may go home to your parents, and when you and your Fairon are guarding your sheep, think sometimes of your old Colonel, who, but for you two, would never have seen France again.' E. D.

THE OWL'S SCHOOL.

An Indian Fable.

'OLD Wisdom' was an owl-schoolmaster, and such a first-rate teacher that everybody desired to take lessons from him. When he wanted to know what progress his scholars had made in their studies, he used to give them questions to answer. Upon one occasion the first question was: 'Why does the moon shine?'

To this each pupil gave a different, although similar, answer—different in form, similar in spirit. The nightingale's reply was: 'That its pure light may cheer me as I sing all night to my bride, the rose.' The lily said: 'That I may enjoy its beams.' The hare said: 'That in the morning there may be enough dew for me to lap.' The dog's answer was: 'That I may discover the thieves prowling around my master's house.' The conceited little glowworm said: 'To throw me into the shade, because the moon envies me.' The fox answered: 'To show me the way to the poultry-yard.'

'Enough!' said the wise old owl. 'Only one moon shines in the sky, and each of you makes its glorious light serve his own petty purpose. How true it is that self reigns supreme!'

THE DAY THE MASTER WENT.

WE had gathered in the schoolroom when the lessons all were done, The most part went unheeding, though some hoped to see some fun.

The Master of the Lower Fifth was leaving school that day,
And he wanted just to say 'Good-bye' before he went away.
So the Doctor sent a message, 'Would the boys just be so kind,
When the afternoon was finished, as to stay a bit behind?'
So when the school was over our footsteps all were bent,
And the boys all took their places, on the day the Master went.

We had looked upon his features many, many times before,
But to-day we watched him curiously as he entered by the door.
He seemed a little nervous, and his face was somewhat white,
As though he feared the ordeal—as well indeed he might.
For boys are not emotional, although their hearts are true,
And speaking generally they all dislike 'a great to do.'
But the silence was impressive, and each boy just forward leant,
For we wanted all to hear his words, the day the Master went.

His voice just shook a little when he first began to speak,
And it sounded very different from when he taught us Greek.
He spoke about the times we'd had, the years he had been there,
He had tried to do his duty—to be always just and fair.
And then he asked forgiveness if he'd done to any wrong,
And said the kindness we had showed—he should think of that for long.
He asked us to believe him that the best he'd always meant,
And he hoped we would recall sometimes the day the Master went.

Now boys are not emotional, as I have said before,
But many eyes were misty as we gazed upon the floor.
And when he spoke about the kindness all had shown to him,
I don't mind saying that my own were positively dim.
And some of us began to think of kindnesses *he'd* done—
Of how he joined us in our games, and helped us in our fun.
And sometimes when the tasks were hard, how over us he'd bent,
Oh, yes! it all came back again, the day the Master went.

I thought I knew a lot of boys, and the natures they possess,
But the feeling that they showed that day surprised me, I confess.
And half a minute afterwards it did one good to hear,
How the rafters of the old room shook with the loud and hearty cheer.

But that comes natural to boys—but this was very strange,
And I really can't recall the like, where'er my feelings range;
How a lump arose in many throats, how many heads were bent,
While here and there a sob was heard—on the day the Master went.
FRANK ELLIS.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

4.—GEOGRAPHICAL CHARADE.

1. To fasten, or bind things together,
To lead unto, or fix, or tether,
To form relations willingly,
Add street to street, or sea to sea,
Bring the diverse to unity.
2. The something dear to every one,
The mystery, the thing unknown,
The self, the soul, the separate being,
The one not seen, but always seeing,
Accompanied, and yet alone.
3. To sever with a sudden blow,
Sharply to strike, to wound the foe,
To engrave a picture, shape a dress,
Offend a friend beyond redress,
And, knowing, appear not to know.

Now take these things—they will attest
A state with faith and freedom blest,
Where learning's great advance is made,
Where there are riches, commerce, trade,
The things enlightened men love best.

(Answer on page 147.)

C. J. B.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC ON PAGE 75.

L a u r e L
E r m i n E
M u s h r o o M
O s w e g O
N o t i o N

'THE MOTHER OF INVENTION.'

AN examiner was once greatly puzzled by an answer which a small boy gave to one of his questions. In the reading-lesson the word 'invention' had occurred, and the examiner asked the boy if he knew what an 'invention' was.

'Please, sir,' answered the child, 'it's either a little boy or a little girl.'

The examiner was a wise man. He was not vexed or put out at receiving this queer answer, neither did he laugh at it.

But presently he asked the scholar why he answered so.

'Because, sir,' said the child, 'I have read somewhere, or heard somebody say, that 'Necessity is the mother of Invention,' so I thought 'Invention' must be the name of a little boy or girl.'

The examiner was quite pleased with this child, who had taken the trouble to *think*, and to use his reasoning powers, even if he used them wrongly.

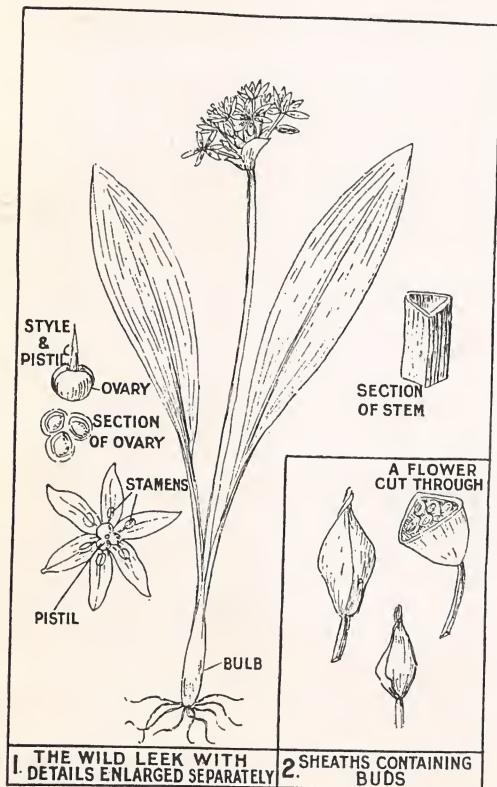
FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

IV.—THE LEEK OR THE DAFFODIL OF WALES?



NATIONAL Flowers seem to be quite inseparable from dispute, for here, again, we find the people of Wales disagreeing as to the plant or flower emblem of their country. As I spend a good deal of time in Wales, I have taken the opportunity of asking various Welshmen for their opinions on the matter, and the arguments they in turn put before me in favour of either the Leek or the Daffodil le't me in a very mystified state! The whole matter

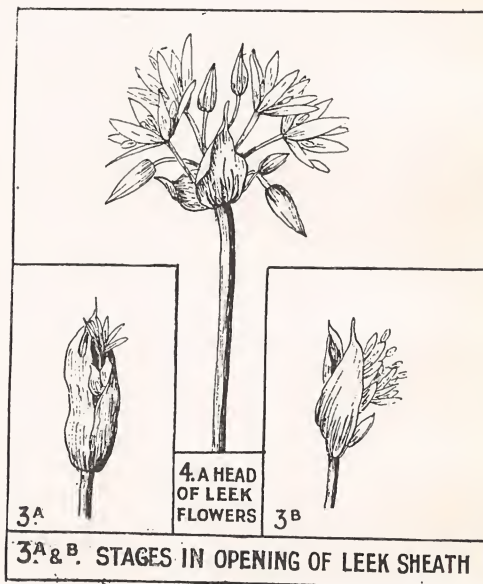
has been brought into prominence again lately by the creation of the Welsh Guards by King George V. When the question of their badge was brought forward, the choice between the Leek and the Daffodil was given to King George, and, much to the delight of some and the



the safest way to keep the respect of all is to put forth the claims of *both*.

If the ordinary individual was asked which he would prefer for a National Emblem, the strong-smelling Leek or the dainty, graceful, inoffensive Daffodil, why, no one would give the matter a second thought, but vote in favour of the Daffodil! But you see these matters do not depend on what any number of persons may admire as a flower, but on *history*.

Here, again, as in the case of the much-disputed-about Shamrock, legend, which *may* be history, plays a very



prominent part. There are two legends and a custom in favour of the Leek! First, there is a tradition that when the Welsh, in the time of Cadwallan (about 633), fought against Edwin, King of Northumbria (that is, the northern part of England), in order to distinguish his men from the English, he commanded each man to wear a Leek in his cap. The Welsh won the day, and it is said that from that time they considered the Leek their national plant. Then, again, in an ancient manuscript, in the account of the Battle of Cressy, where Welshmen played a prominent part, it states that a certain captain, desiring to ascertain how many Welshmen were on the field (which happened to be a field of Leeks), at the end of the battle asked each Welshman to place a Leek in his cap to distinguish him from the other soldiers, and, behold! nearly all present were Welshmen! So this is another supposed reason for the adoption of the Leek.

Lastly, there is a very ancient and, I think, happy custom in Wales among the small farmers called Cymorthan, or 'neig'bourly help.' If a farmer is known not to be overburdened with this world's goods—in fact, to be rather badly off—his neighbours, on an agreed day, go and give him a hand with his harvest or his shearing, or whatever is needed. Some would come quite a distance to 'do his bit,' for the farmers are often a long way apart, and as a contribution towards his food he used to bring a few leeks (a vegetable very dear to the Welsh) to add to the general stew. This is suggested as

disappointment of others, he commanded that the Leek should be the official badge of the Welsh Guards. This, I suppose, *should* settle the matter once and for all in favour of the Leek, but I still find those who maintain that the Daffodil *should* have been chosen! So, as I do not feel convinced of the absolute claim of either, I think

a likely explanation of the Leek's popularity, but personally I should favour the other stories.

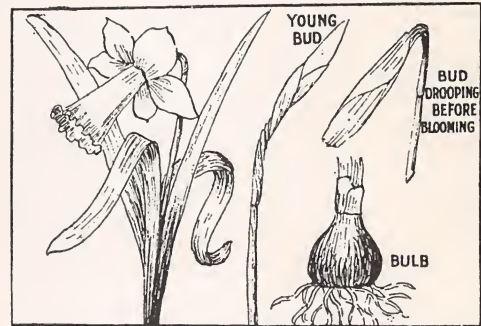
Next, as to the claims of the Daffodil! The basis of the argument is that the above legends are all right, but that it was *not* the Leek that was used but the Daffodil, and that the mistake has arisen because the same Welsh word, 'cenin,' stands for both Leek and Daffodil! Also, the Daffodil has a local name of 'Peter's Leek,' or 'Cenin Pedi.' There is an ancient church in the Conway Valley called 'Llanbedr y Cenin,' that is, 'St. Peter of the Daffodil'—or 'St. Peter of the Leek' might be another translation. But this church in springtime is surrounded by fields of wild Daffodils, so the inference is that it should be 'St. Peter of the Daffodil.'

Then, again, before the days of exact scientific knowledge, the word 'leek' or 'liac' was a general term for plants (just as 'wort,' 'herb,' and 'grass' were). We have the term leek still with us in the names of certain plants, viz., houseleek, garlic (or garleek), and leacward was the term for a gardener. Then a Welshman put forward the argument that it would be a large field which would contain enough leeks for an army, but that Daffodils grow by thousands in the fields in parts of Wales just as cowslips or buttercups do in other places. The Daffodil, too, is in bloom for St. David's Day, March 1st, when all good Welsh people wear the emblem they approve. St. David is the patron saint of Wales, and they have associated the emblem with him, although there is very little ground for any actual connection. So much for the history; now for the character of the claimants.

The wild Leek (*Allium ursinum*) is a most delightful plant at a distance! It is a case of distance lending enchantment! I remember, years ago, when climbing in Wales with my brother, we saw above us in a little nook a mass of what we took to be Lily of the Valley. We were greatly excited, and hurried up to the spot in delight, picturing ourselves gathering big bunches and

holds them in a triangular lump (fig. 2). When this lump bursts it does so down one of the angles, and the buds peep out as seen in fig. 3. This sheath remains around the base of the cluster, as you see in fig. 4. The flowers have six white petals, six white stamens and a green ovary.

Another member of this same family is the Star of Bethlehem we have with our spring flowers. It is very



7. THE WILD DAFFODIL & DETAILS

pretty, but its objectionable scent makes it almost impossible to be on friendly terms with it.

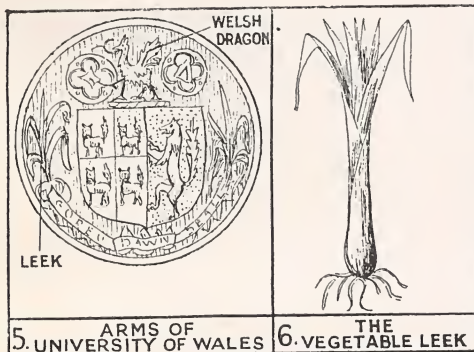
The Leek is a bulbous plant, and of course the vegetable we eat has been cultivated from this family. It is the whole plant which is used as the emblem; it appears in the arms of the University of North Wales, as you see in fig. 5, but is more often shown more true to nature, as in fig. 6.

Now the wild Daffodil of Wales is the *Narcissus Pseudo-narcissus*. It is of a pale yellow colour, and is not quite so large as our cultivated varieties. Fig. 7 shows you its portrait. You see it is just an ordinary single daffodil of the trumpet order. The leaves usually number about three, and are of the bluish-green so common to our bulbous plants. You know that the 'bloom' on the leaves is like the 'bloom' on grapes or plums, it rubs off at the touch and is really a protective layer of wax—a protection from frost and small insects. The flowers are scentless, the central tube being often longer than the outer ring of yellow leaves. The edge of the tube or trumpet is either roughly divided into six parts or is waved. The whole of the plant is dangerous in the hands of children, as any part put in the mouth is likely to cause sickness. The flower-stems are two-edged, and the buds are enclosed in a scaly sheath.

This flower when in bud points towards the sky, but as soon as it begins to give signs of opening it droops. This gives rise to a saying in the country that the 'daffodils are falling for bloom' an expression which greatly pleased me when I first heard it from an old countryman who wished to express to me that the spring was coming.

Now, whether the Welsh National Flower be Leek or Daffodil, I think that you will agree with me that the collection of evidence I have put before you is of interest, and I expect the rival claims will always exist and never be settled; and it seems to me that each had better wear the emblem of his choice—but I know this, that if I were Welsh the Daffodil would be my choice!

E. M. BARLOW.



sending them to our friends! But as soon as our feet crushed a few leaves we were very rudely undeceived, for a most terrible scent of *onions* greeted us, and we quickly departed, a sadder and a wiser couple! Of course the leek is very pretty but there one's admiration ceases! Fig. 1 is a complete plant; the leaves are opposite, but only clasping at the base; they are really exactly like Lily of the Valley leaves only a little paler in colour and also slightly narrower. The flowers are in clusters of about a dozen on the ends of triangular stems, and are enclosed in a nearly white scaly sheath, which

ONE TOUCH OF NATURE.

WE have many illustrations of the truth of the words of Shakespeare, that

'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.'

There is a beautiful illustration of it in an incident that took place in the great Civil War in America between the North and the South. At one period during the war the armies were encamped on opposite sides of a river. It was Christmas Eve, when the hearts and thoughts of every one are turned towards home. The soldiers of the North, to while away the time, sang some songs. One of the songs they sang was 'Home, sweet Home.' Suddenly there was a sound of singing from the other side of the river. The soldiers of the South had heard the song, which they too knew and loved, and joined in the singing; and these two hostile armies, which in a few days would again be engaged in deadly conflict, were joined in 'a truce of God,' inspired by the thought of the homes where their loved ones lived, and from which they had been torn by the dread necessity of war.

F. E.

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINÉY.

(Continued from page 103.)

THEY were talking over this project in a desultory manner, for the heat was too great to get up much enthusiasm, when they noticed that the Reis gave a searching look round at the sky and seemed to grow more uneasy. The Sheikh also eyed the horizon critically and went forward to join him. As he passed the boys he said, with a shake of the head, 'Bad storm comes.'

The boys looked at the blue vault above and round to the horizon; there was no sign of storm to their eyes. All was serene and cloudless except for the faint gauzy cloud above the hills that the Sheikh's eyes had been fixed on as he spoke. The terrors of a storm on the English coast they could understand, but here, with the sun shining and the sky an expanse of blue, there appeared nothing to affright the most timid. A strong wind blew from the north, and at times came in hot puffs, and the boys felt as though they stood over a baker's oven as they breathed in short, quick gasps through parted lips. But the face of the sky was now changing with startling rapidity, the grey cloud was stealing up and covering the west—stealing up to blot out the sun.

A cry of '*Samma! Samma!*' ('Sandstorm!') startled the deck. The storm was gathering force as it advanced. The clouds had darkened to a dull-red colour, smearing out the distant landscape. Their forefront, ragged and dropping, now flung a blood-red curtain over the sun, and a funereal darkness fell on the earth beneath.

Some one shouted in English, 'Hold on!' as a gust of wind from the west made every spar and bolt rattle: the vessel gave a jump as if it had been stung, and strained at its moorings.

Now the storm broke over them. Fierce gusts of wind struck the vessel: something snapped, with a loud report. The dahabeeyah plunged; her moorings were

torn out, she was in the current, bumping among the rocks; her foremast was gone, and with it the man who stood near. The sail had burst unfurled, and flung wildly out, flapping and lashing. Then the mast snapped; and sail, spar, cordage, and man, in a struggling mass, flew over the boat's side, far out into the darkened turmoil of the stream. Down fell clouds of hot sand on the deck.

The Sheikh hustled the boys and the Professor into the saloon. Selim was already there, under the lounge. Down came the burning sand, hissing like hail; the deck was covered with heaps that moved and wriggled like snakes, were scattered, collected, dumped down, and scattered again.

The hot wind from the desert had launched itself with fury into the bosom of the prevailing wind that swept up the Nile Valley. It seemed a mortal combat between two forces in the air. They smote and buffeted each other; they advanced, paused, fell to grips and clutched in deadly embrace, rolled round and round, this way, that way, in a delirium of rage. They moaned, and it was like the sound of a great crowd; they gasped, fell silent, then gave forth a mighty scream as of a sudden pain, and round and round they rolled again, flinging out wild banners of burning sand.

The *Isis*, dragging the wreckage of her foremast, bumped from rock to rock, turned helplessly, went on her side, then caught on the rocks again. It seemed as if she were the poor prize for which the winds contended. They smashed her rudder, they tore her deck, like two lean greyhounds, with teeth fixed in the quivering body of a hare, struggling and tugging for the prey. Now the sand swept, revolving in living funnels, waving, swaying, dancing like Macbeth's witches round the cauldron—dancing in fiendish rivalry of the screaming wind.

And what of the passengers crouching helplessly in the saloon? The sand had swept in like snow-drifts, and lay ankle-deep on the floor. The air was full of fine dust that blocked the nostrils, choked the mouth, and threatened suffocation. The Sheikh had made them stop their noses and mouths with handkerchiefs, and wrapped his own head in his *haik*. Selim's face was hidden in his up-turned skirts. They breathed the hot air, strained through these coverings, with the greatest difficulty. They slid and were bumped from side to side with the erratic motions of the vessel, and when she went on her side they rolled gasping in a heap on the floor.

How long it lasted they did not know: they could not give one single thought to the danger of the vessel capsizing, which was the most probable ending. Without a keel, and with a loose, shifting cargo, in her helpless condition this must be her fate unless she became jammed and supported among the rocks.

The boys' minds were confused by the din without and the lurching of the vessel. There was no door to the saloon. The wind swept in and wildly round and round the walls, like a broom, with the difference that, instead of removing dust and refuse, it deposited wreaths and drifts of sand. A sheet of corrugated iron, torn from some forward part of the vessel, was hurled through the doorway, and clanked on the table; and, in the earlier moments of the storm, the figure of a man was swept or bounded in, and dived beneath a seat. Who he was they did not know: their minds were completely concentrated on the effort to draw each moment's breath.

At length there was a lull without. The storm had spent itself, or was vanquished by the steady force of the north wind, or was passing away on its devastating course to afflict other regions; and there was a strange hush which seemed like a tangible thing. The Sheikh uncovered his head; the boys looked up, and felt with delight that they could breathe more freely. There was no motion of the vessel: it was fixed, the deck sloping at a considerable angle. They got on their feet and staggered to the doorway, feeling as weak as if they had suffered a long illness. One deep breath of fresh air sent the blood tingling through their veins to the very fingers' ends.

The scene on deck was melancholy in the extreme. The sun was still hidden, covered by a blanket of dense mist; but the red sand-clouds had disappeared. The water looked sullen and livid where the currents flowed and still foamed angrily among the isolated rocks and jagged headlands. Before the storm, flocks of birds had circled overhead or clustered on the rocks; but these had all vanished, and all appearance of life with them.

But it was the scene on the deck of the *Isis* that struck a chill to their hearts. She lay with her forepart wedged in a group of rocks that formed a small islet near the middle of the stream; the wreck of her foremast and sail, still dragging over the bow, littered the rock and bulged in the surf. Of the poor fellow who had been swept over the side there was no sign. The galley had been carried clean away, the sloping deck was covered with tangled cordage, and on the lower side the sand might have been shovelled up in bucketsful, and the stump of the foremast pointed a splintered finger upward.

The after-part of the vessel was little better. Though the mainmast still stood, the great sail lay sprawling on deck and over the side and dabbled in the water. The rudder had been shattered, and crushed against the stern; and there—worst of all—lay the crouched-up body of the Reis beside the broken helm. He was quite dead—suffocated by the sand.

They turned from the sad sight, and bethought them of what was best to be done. How long the wreck would hold together they could not tell; at any moment the current might force it from its hold on the rocks. It hung mainly by the wreckage of the foremast, and if this slender anchorage gave way the current would dash her from rock to rock till she turned over and went to pieces.

They found that the felucca had escaped in a remarkable manner. The painter still held, and she had been sheltered by the broken rudder and the fallen sail. This latter almost completely covered her; and so, instead of being filled with sand and sunk to the bottom, as they might have expected, she was perfectly sound and free from sand. The equipment provided for the Professor's expedition was still secure in the stern, and the small mast and sail were rolled up and snugly stowed away. This was the one piece of good fortune in a disastrous adventure.

There was no time to be lost, however. It was evident that, without a moment's warning, the dahabeeyah might be wrenched from her rocky shelter and sent hurtling down the cataract again. They hastened to get a few things from the cabin, and freed the felucca from the fallen sail, then laid the body of the dead Reis at the bottom of the boat.

It was a mournful party that squeezed into the little felucca—six in all, beside the dead Captain—the Professor and the three boys, the Arab Sheikh, and the one man who was left of the crew of the *Isis*.

Of the three who had been put ashore to secure the moorings they could see nothing. There was little doubt but that they had sheltered themselves among the rocks and escaped the suffocating sand, although they made no appearance on the banks.

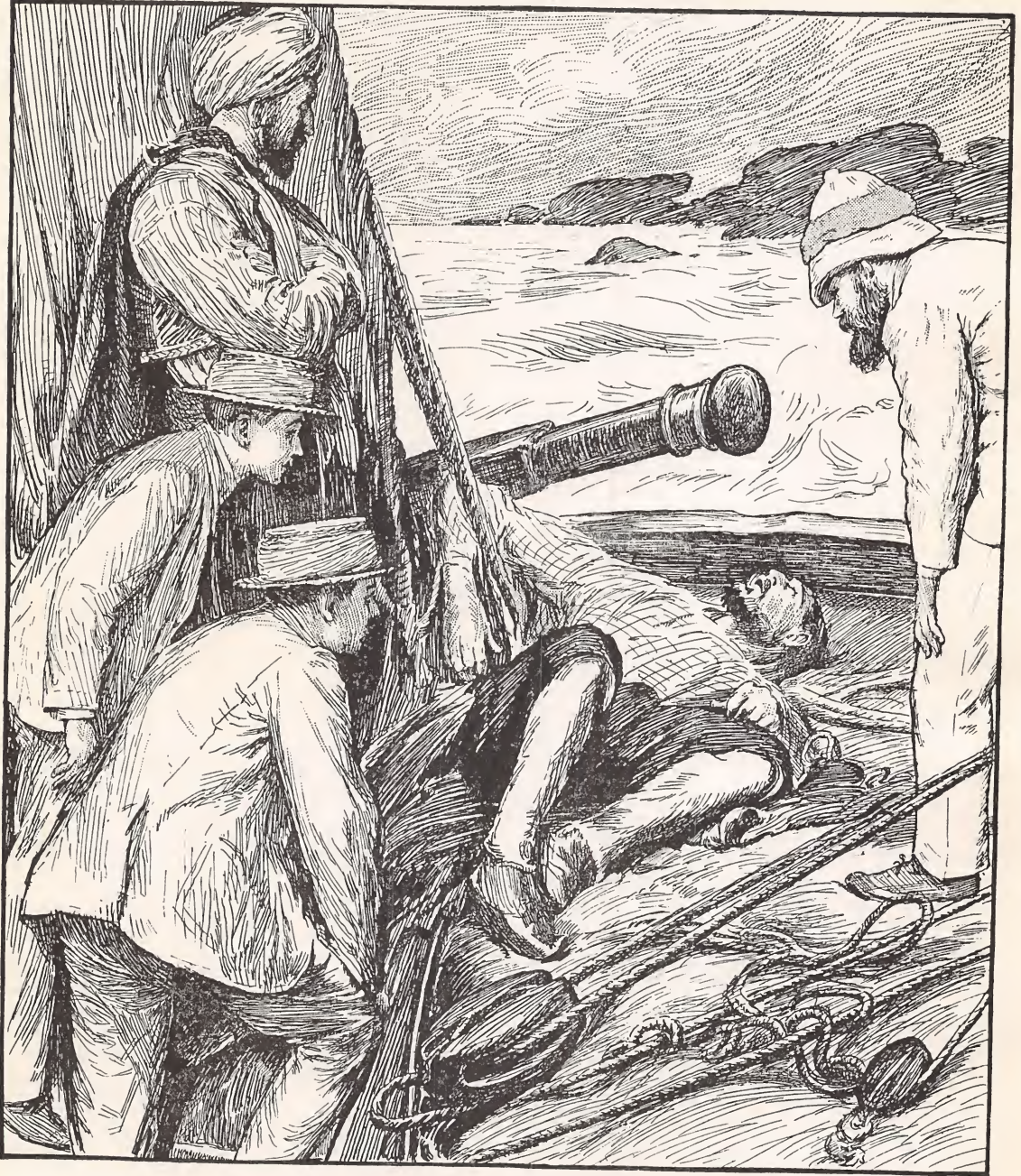
They were still in a dangerous position. It was no easy task to pull the boat across those rushing currents and to keep her from being knocked to pieces against the rocks. If they crept too near the rocks, to avoid the force of the torrent, they were in danger of being caught in the whirlpools and foaming cauldrons that boiled around them; if they struck out to cross the currents which, smooth as they looked, were racing rapidly, a false move, bringing them broadside on, might overturn the boat in an instant. The boatman took one oar as they pushed out from the shelter of the wreck; the Sheikh motioning the Professor to keep his seat, took the other; a few muttered words passed between them, and then they settled to their work. The Arab Sheikh handled his oar in a way one would little expect in a son of the desert; he pulled as calmly and as steadily as a seaman, the habitual quiet smile on his lips, but his keen eyes always on the watch.

It was slow work; they selected the least turbulent currents, gently edging across their track toward the shore, and skilfully avoided being carried by them against the sunken rocks which lay in the channel. Now drifting, now straining every muscle, taking an oblique course which bore them some distance down the river, they gradually neared the shore, and when Uncle Charlie cleverly steered them into a tiny rock-bound inlet and the keel grated on the bottom, the boys would have given a cheer, had it not been for the quiet figure which lay at the bottom of the boat covered with the sail.

They landed, and after a brief consultation decided that the Professor and the Sheikh should proceed to a small village which lay about a mile further down to give information of the disaster. The boatman and Selim were to accompany them to help in carrying the body of the Reis, on a stretcher made from the two spars and the sail of the felucca. Dick and Harry, completely tired out, were to remain with the boat till their return. The body was laid on the sail between the two poles, covered with the Sheikh's haik, and slowly the sad little procession moved away.

Left to themselves, the boys sat on the thwarts of the boat in silence. The events of the day had been a severe experience to the two lads. Never before had they seen Nature in her terrible moods, when man seems but a frail plaything in her hands; never had they stood face to face with death before, and seen the strong man struck down. They felt chilled and awe-struck, as they began to realise a different world lying side by side with the merry little world of boyhood; and they felt tired—so tired that they could not possibly have dragged their legs the one mile to the village with Uncle Charlie—so tired that they could scarcely raise the hands that hung listlessly by their sides; but one never knows the store of reserve force that lies mysteriously hidden away within, unless some powerful excitant unseals it and brings it forth.

(Continued on page 119.)



"There lay the body of the Reis, beside the broken helm."



"Some one was coming across the sands towards her."

MORWENNA AND A MERMAID.

MORWENNA laid down the coarse grey stocking at which she had been knitting all the afternoon, and raised a pair of tired eyes to the blue line of horizon which stretched as far as eye could see along the village street. For some minutes she sat gazing dreamily before her, her hands lying idle in her lap, and so busy was she with her thoughts that she did not notice her brother walking slowly up the road towards her, until his cheery greeting made her look up with a start.

'Dreaming, Morwenna?' he asked, with a gay laugh, as, flinging a bundle of nets to the ground, he seated himself beside the little figure on the rough stone doorstep.

'Not exactly,' answered Morwenna, after a moment's pause; 'I was reckoning. Do you know, David—' She turned suddenly, and raised a troubled face to her brother. 'It will take three years working at stockings before we get the money to take us to London—and that's if I sell them all!'

David gave an amused but kindly laugh. 'Better give it up, then,' he suggested.

'Give it up!' The indignation in Morwenna's face plainly showed the fixed determination in her mind. 'Why, if I had to work for six years I would still go on. But, Davy,' she lowered her voice confidentially as she leaned towards her brother, in eagerness, 'perhaps I won't have to work so long, after all. Perhaps I can get some one to help me. I was down talking to Ned Pillinger while he mended his nets this morning, and he told me there was a mermaid come to the cove. He saw her plainly himself last night, sitting on the rocks when the tide was right out, and he says most likely she will be there again, as the moon is full to-night, so I'm going out to try to find her.'

This time David's laugh was more amused than kind. 'You shouldn't listen to tales like that,' he said, at last. 'You will never find a mermaid outside the story-books, so what's the good of looking?'

Morwenna's grey eyes blazed, and she rose to her feet in sudden impatience. 'Oh, well, if you know better than Ned Pillinger you needn't come,' she retorted, hotly. 'Perhaps you will be sorry in the morning!' And, sweeping the bundle of knitting into her pinafore, she turned her back on her brother, and hurried down the little street towards the sea.

The big red sun had long sunk below the horizon, and the moon lay cold and bright in the sky above when Morwenna crept out of bed that night and silently made her way into the deserted street. Her unshod feet made no sound on the uneven cobbles, and when she reached the long stretch of sand, laid bare by the retreating tide, she quickened her steps to a run, making her way towards the jagged black rocks under the far cliffs.

The moon shone softly in a flood of radiant light, turning the gold of the sand into silver, and, as Morwenna looked down, her eyes suddenly fell on something that gleamed and sparkled quite near her feet. Quickly she stooped to pick it up, and a moment later she was examining, with excited eyes, a wonderful golden bracelet, set with precious stones, that shimmered eerily on her little brown upturned palm.

For a full minute she stood gazing at the wonderful treasure, then she raised her head, and as she scanned the long line of beach her heart began to throb un-

evenly. Some one was coming across the sand towards her—some one who was walking with slow steps, and whose bent head spoke of eyes that were searching for something on the moonlit shore. A tumult of ideas rushed into the little girl's mind, and she put her hand confusedly to her head. No one had seen her—no one would ever know. Her thoughts flew to the little money-box, with its meagre savings at home; to the gold that would be there if she sold the bracelet in town to-morrow; and to all that that gold would mean. Instinctively her grasp tightened over the treasure in her hand, and she looked round eagerly for a way of escape. The rocks before her rose black and sheltering, and in another minute her nimble feet were clambering stealthily across the high boulders which she knew would completely hide her from view.

Her heart was thumping nervously with fear, and her hands trembled as they clutched at the hard rock. The sudden call of a seagull above her head made her start in terror—somehow her foot slipped, and with a cry of fear she fell heavily to the ground. Then there was darkness—but in the distance far away a girl's head was suddenly raised, and two feet began running swiftly across the sand.

Morwenna opened her eyes, and stared in dazed confusion at the anxious face looking into hers. 'The mermaid!' she half-whispered, in awed bewilderment.

'No, dear,' a soft voice answered; 'I have come to take you home. You have had a fall. Do you feel any pain?'

'My foot,' replied Morwenna, weakly, trying to raise herself; then she fell back suddenly, and her hands seemed to clutch at something that she could not find. A rush of memory had come to her, and for a moment the pain in her ankle was forgotten.

'The bracelet—I stole it,' she whispered. 'It belonged to some one else, and I found it. I was going to take it away.'

'You found it here?' the girl's voice asked, eagerly. 'You have it now?'

'I had it when I fell,' replied Morwenna. 'I wonder if you could see the lady on the beach, as I think it belonged to her. I'd like to tell her I'm sorry—and it was only because we wanted to go to London so much, Davy and I, and three years seemed such a long time to wait.'

She leaned back wearily, and the girl lifted her into her arms. 'It was I whom you saw on the beach,' she said, gently. 'The bracelet belongs to me, and now you must tell me about your plan of going to London, and who is Davy?'

It took a long time to explain everything, and as Morwenna talked her new friend began deftly bandaging the injured ankle, now very swollen and painful. When she had finished she lifted the little girl on to her shoulders, and slowly began retracting her steps across the shore, the bracelet, which had been found in a crevice of the rocks, clasped safely on her wrist.

By the time that the little cottage was reached Morwenna was in great pain, and she lay tossing in her bed all night, unable to sleep, and longing for morning, when she could tell David what had happened. Her face lit up with joy when she heard his heavy footsteps on the stairs at sunrise, and as he opened the door she held out two eager welcoming hands. 'You were right about the mermaid, Davy. The lady said there aren't any real ones, and I'm so sorry I was cross.'

David smiled kindly as he stroked the little hand on the coverlet. 'How's the foot?' he asked.

'It will be better to-morrow,' returned Morwenna with a brave smile. 'And, Davy, the lady's going to give us the money to go to London and see the Lord Mayor's Show—you and me—and I don't deserve it, because I did steal the bracelet for a little time. It was a frightfully miserable little time,' she added, after a moment's pause. 'I won't ever try to steal again.'

'So you've learnt a more valuable lesson than that there aren't any real mermaids,' said David, and his clasp tightened over the little hand.

Morwenna nodded solemnly, and the resolution was made sure as she looked into the kind eyes above her; then with a sigh of contentment she lay back among the pillows.

VIOLA VIVIAN.

ONE AT A TIME.

ONE at a time the bricks are set
 Before the tall towers rise.
 One at a time the silver stars
 Shine in the evening skies.
 One at a time are battles fought,
 And victories are won.
 One at a time the lessons learnt,
 Before the task is done.
 One at a time the little steps
 Are taken by small feet,
 Before they climb the mountain's height,
 Or toil along the street.
 One at a time to baby lips
 The little words we teach,
 Until there comes the poet's rhyme,
 The statesman's glowing speech.
 One at a time the flowers bloom
 In the small garden bed,
 Until they all do blossom there,
 Yellow and white and red.
 One at a time—O learn it now—
 All races must be run,
 All lessons learnt, all summits gained,
 And all life's duties done.

FRANK ELLIS.

ACROSS THE WATER.

III.—HOUSES ON BRIDGES.

A HOUSE on a bridge! It seems a strange place to choose for a home; but, then, in these modern days, we are not, as a rule, cramped for room, and there are plenty of desirable building sites to be obtained in the neighbourhood of our great cities. In the Middle Ages things were very different, for those were the times of civil wars, of unexpected attacks and of sudden dangers. It was necessary for towns to be built with strong battlemented walls, and, in the narrow limits of these enclosures houses had to be crowded together, and every foot of ground was needed.

It is difficult for us nowadays to realise what a mediæval city was like, with its narrow streets, small open spaces, and sordid dwellings that often actually leaned against the walls of churches and fine public

buildings. In these conditions, of course, space could not be wasted, and when a bridge happened to be within the walls, buildings, such as houses, shops, and even small churches, were often erected upon it.

Old London Bridge was utilised in this manner, and there are many quaint drawings and prints still in existence which show us what it was like.

The famous bridge was built in the twelfth century, being finished in 1209, and it was nearly a thousand feet long, with a gate-house at each end and a small chapel dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury in the centre. There were many shops of all sorts, and in front of these hung the coloured signs of the various tradesmen. So gay and animated was the whole scene, indeed, that the words, 'As fine as London Bridge,' came to be a familiar proverb in the City.

A touch of tragedy, however, was not wanting; for on the gate-houses were often exhibited the heads of traitors who had been executed on Tower Hill, close at hand. Other and less melancholy relics were the banners of conquered enemies, taken in battle, and historians tell us that flags of the Spanish Armada ships were hung on London Bridge after the great Thanksgiving Service had taken place at St. Paul's Cathedral.

A writer, who lived at about this time, gives us a vivid description of the bridge, and says that it had 'buildings and stately and beautiful houses on each side,' while he goes on to relate how many of the houses had flat roofs, with pretty gardens and little arbours.

It must have been very interesting to live on London Bridge in the old days, for the road that crossed it led straight to the heart of the City, and wonderful pageants and processions often passed by on the way to Westminster Abbey or Saint Paul's.

It was here that the baby-bride of Richard II., Isobel of France, was welcomed to London; it was here that a great tournament took place in Henry the Eighth's reign, and it was here that the wonderful funeral train of Henry V. entered the capital, to which only a few years before the victor of Agincourt had returned in triumph.

But although an exciting place of residence, London Bridge was not always a very safe one, and there is a thrilling story of a little girl who fell out of one of the windows of her home into the Thames, and was rescued by her father's apprentice. The tale ends in quite a romantic fashion, for the young hero later on married the little girl, and from them were descended one of the greatest families in England. In those days the river ran very swiftly through the narrow arches of the old bridge, and deaths from drowning were very frequent, so Edward Osborne's bravery was more remarkable than it would be at the present day.

One other disadvantage of old London Bridge was that its narrow arches in frosty winters were easily blocked by ice, and so the whole river was sometimes frozen over.

Old London Bridge, with its picturesque buildings and tall gate-houses, has vanished long ago, but bridges which resemble it in some ways are still to be found in different parts of the world. One of the most famous of these is the beautiful Ponte Vecchio, in Florence, over the river Arno, which has buildings on it and a covered road. This bridge was built in the year 1382, and it was designed by the great artist, Taddeo Gaddi.

Our illustration shows us a curious bridge in the



A Bridge in the Fayoum, Egypt.

Fayoum, which in appearance is not at all unlike the Ponte Vecchio on a small scale.

The Fayoum is a large oasis in Egypt, south-west of Cairo, and, as it is surrounded with sandy desert, every foot of available land is wanted for purposes of agriculture. It was probably in order to economise space that houses and shops were built on this bridge. In the picture we can see the flat roofs of the houses, the balconied rooms jutting out over the water, and the narrow-shuttered windows.

This strange structure is the only native bridge of any size in Egypt, and it is very interesting for this reason.

In China, too, we often find bridges with houses on them. At Nankin, for instance there is a wonderful bridge made entirely of red granite, and on it there is a double row of one-story buildings; and at Ching-Keang-Foo, on the Yang-Tze-Kiang River, there is a very beautiful one-arch bridge, over the imperial canal, with houses on it.

A. A. MEHLEY.



"She soon captured the black-winged creature."

THE INTERLOPER.

I KNEW we should hate her!" said Eadred, and there was a note of triumph in his voice, in spite of the despondency of his expression.

Dorothy rocked herself to and fro several times in the hammock, as she stared dreamily up into the blue of the sky; then she turned towards her brother.

"Of course it's hateful having a cousin to do lessons with us," she said, "and it's still worse having her to

live here all the term; but if she had been jolly and sporting, and ——

'Sporting!' interrupted Eadred, scornfully. 'Why, Pearl's the unsportingest girl I have ever seen! She's afraid of spiders!'

'I wouldn't mind that so much,' replied Dorothy, 'but I'm sure she's a sneak. Last night, when we were undressing, I dropped Nurse's blue candlestick on to the floor, and smashed it in half. I didn't want her to know, because I knew she'd make me buy a new one out of my pocket-money, so I hid it in the dolls'-house, and thought I'd mend it with glue to-day. Well, Pearl saw me, and when I said I wasn't going to tell Nurse she made an awful fuss, and I'm sure she will speak to Mother about it.'

'She's jolly selfish, anyhow,' said Eadred. 'She never even asked if you or I would like the drive into Rochester this afternoon. She just got Mother to take her, and here are we left at home, and I suppose the new governess will come before they get back.'

'Perhaps she will hate Pearl, too,' said Dorothy, hopefully, 'anyhow —— Oh, look, Eadred! Such a big stag-beetle!'

She broke off suddenly, and, slipping to the ground, soon captured the black-winged creature in her hands.

Eadred watched the operation lazily, then suddenly something seemed to strike him, and he jumped to his feet.

'Dorothy! That's put a splendid idea into my mind. We will pay Pearl out to-night!'

Dorothy imprisoned the captive in her cotton pinafore, then looked up at her brother.

'You know how afraid she is of beetles and frogs, and all the things we like,' he continued, excitedly, 'Let's collect a whole lot, and put them in her room! There's that old toad we found in the rose-bed, and this stag-beetle ——'

'And the hedgehog!' put in Dorothy, eagerly. 'Oh, won't she scream! She's certain to go and tell Miss James, though, and get us into a scrape.'

'I don't care! It's worth it!' replied Eadred, recklessly. 'We will give her a good fright, and teach her not to bag the drive into Rochester again without asking us. Come on! I'm going to look for the toad in the potting-shed!'

The children were sitting at the round schoolroom table, over their biscuits and milk, when the carriage returned from town, and, as Pearl came in and took her place quietly beside them, something in the pale, sensitive face gave Dorothy's conscience a momentary pang.

'The new governess has come,' she said, hurriedly. 'Eadred thinks she looks dreadfully cross, but I say it's only because she wears spectacles.'

Pearl looked up, shyly. 'She's going to sleep in my room to-night,' she said, 'because a lot of soot's fallen down the chimney in hers. I'm going to have the camp-bed in Uncle Ned's dressing-room.'

She stopped as she caught sight of Dorothy and Eadred exchanging horrified glances, and Mrs. Barnet's voice in the distance relieved an awkward silence.

'Pearl! Run quickly and take your things out of your room, dear. Miss James is very tired after her long journey, and she's going to bed in a few minutes.'

Pearl jumped to her feet, and, as the door closed behind her, Dorothy looked anxiously across the table at her brother.

'We'd better go and tell her,' she said.

'Rather not,' replied Eadred. 'I put the beetle in her nightdress-case, so she's bound to find that.'

'But the toad—in the jug,' Dorothy reminded him, 'and the hedgehog.'

'Well, it'll be all right,' Eadred replied. 'If she hasn't found them by the time she comes back, we will go and take them away before Miss James goes to bed.'

Some minutes elapsed before Pearl's footsteps were heard on the stairs, and, as she opened the door, and returned to the table without a word, Dorothy gave her brother a surreptitious kick. Eadred shuffled uneasily in his chair.

'We let the old hedgehog loose in your room, Pearl,' he said, striving to make his voice sound indifferent. 'I suppose you didn't see him there?'

'Yes, I did,' Pearl answered, simply. 'He was curled up in a ball by my bedroom slippers, so I carried him down to the potting-shed.'

'But—but I thought you couldn't bear to touch him!' exclaimed Dorothy, incredulously.

A faint flush rose to Pearl's cheeks.

'I picked him up with the shovel,' she explained, 'and carried him down in a basket. I was afraid Miss James would see him, and be angry.'

'And the toad—and the beetle?' put in Eadred, breathlessly. 'Did you find them, too?'

'There was a stag-beetle on the counterpane,' Pearl replied. 'I let him loose on the verandah—in the shovel, too; but I didn't see any toad.'

'He was in the jug,' said Eadred, looking rather shamefacedly at Dorothy. 'I'd better go quickly and fetch him.'

'No, no!' cried Pearl, running towards the door. 'I'll go! If she sees me she will think I've gone to fetch something out of my room.'

And before either of her cousins could stop her she had raced past them, and a moment later the sound of her footsteps had died away in the distance.

'We'd better go and see what's happening,' said Eadred, as the minutes went by, and Pearl did not reappear.

Together the two children ran downstairs, and along the passage that led to their cousin's room. The sound of voices brought them to a sudden standstill.

'You must never do it again,' Mrs. Barnet was saying. 'I never allow any live creatures in the bedrooms; and it has given poor Miss James a dreadful fright.'

'I'm so sorry. I will take it out into the garden,' came a quiet little voice in reply.

Eadred darted forward, and burst open the door.

'It wasn't Pearl! We did it!' he began, breathlessly. 'She has been a perfect brick!'

A torrent of explanations followed, but Pearl slipped away before the end, and Dorothy found her afterwards sitting on her little camp-bed in the dusk.

'You have made us feel ashamed of ourselves, Pearl,' she said, shyly. 'It was hateful of us to try and frighten you.'

'You must have thought me hateful for asking for the drive to Rochester,' Pearl answered, softly; 'but I wanted so much to buy this for you to give Nurse.'

She turned aside, and began unwrapping a parcel on the bed beside her. 'It's—it's a candlestick, like the one you broke,' she said.

'And we called her unsporting, and a sneak!' said Dorothy later that evening, when she told the story to Eadred. 'It's made me feel what a sneak-I was about the candlestick.'

'And how unsporting we both were to try to frighten

her,' put in Eadred, humbly. 'Especially me, because I thought of it.'

He stopped, as Dorothy uttered a sudden exclamation. 'Here's the toad! Still in the jug!' she said. 'I will take him down to the garden.'

'Oh, bother! I forgot,' replied Eadred. 'Thanks, awfully, Dorothy.' Then, after a minute, he added, 'You'd better put him over the wall into the lane. We won't keep him any longer.'

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 111.)

SUDDENLY, like the rush of a rocket, Dick sprang to his feet, flung out his arm toward the wreck, and almost shrieked, 'The dervish!'

Harry sprang up, his knees trembling, and muttered beneath his breath, 'The dervish!' The dreadful thought flooded their minds—the wreck—the prisoner, cooped up in the hold to drown like a rat in a trap.

'We must save him,' gasped Dick.

They looked at the boat, and then at the swirling eddies. They tugged at her thwarts and got her afloat; their lips were parched, their hands trembled.

'This will never do' cried Dick, drawing himself up. 'If we're to save him we must pull ourselves together; we must keep cool or we shall make a mess of it. How cool the Sheikh was, and Uncle Charlie too. We must make up our minds just what we are going to do.'

'Right you are,' said Harry; 'flustering is no good.'

'Now,' said Dick, 'we can't go the same way as we came; the current sets this way, and we're not strong enough to pull dead against it. What had we better do? We can't work the boat along the shore, that's certain; we should be smashed to bits on the rocks.'

'If we had the sail we could go against the current, as the dahabeeyah did,' said Harry.

'Ifs are no good,' Dick retorted. 'We haven't got the sail. Now, could we haul the boat along the bank and get up the river above the *Isis*, and float down on her? No, the boat's too heavy with all those things in it.'

'We could hoist them out quick enough,' said Harry.

'No, we should have to drag her half a mile at least: we couldn't do it—no, not if we pitched those things out—she's heavy. No, Harry, we couldn't do it—it's no use, we couldn't do it,' and Dick sat down, put his elbows on his knees, his chin on his hands, and groaned. 'I'd go up the river and find a likely place, and get a log and float down on her, like the niggers do, but I couldn't guide it, and should only be knocked to bits,' he said dolefully, 'and it's no good being killed if you don't do your job.'

Again Dick was on his feet, wildly flinging his arms in the direction of the wreck.

'Look! look!' he cried.

The *Isis* was moving: yes, she was moving, there could be no doubt of it—she was freeing herself from the wreckage that held her to the rock. Again, she moved, this time she was caught by an eddy, slowly swirled round, and, still on her side, floated into the main current and was actually coming down stream toward the boys.

'Quick, Harry! we will get the boat off, and if she doesn't catch again we will wait till she's nearly opposite and make a dash for her.'

The boys pushed the boat into the calm pool where they had landed, and stood ready with the oars to thrust her out clear of the surf that foamed on the rocks and into the current.

The *Isis* was coming on—the boys held their breath—dragging and catching, but still coming on; she had now got way on her, and was moving fast, in spite of the sail that hung over her stern.

'Harry,' said Dick, setting his teeth, 'when she gets opposite that big black rock yonder we must drive out; she's going faster than we can, and we mustn't miss her. Now, then, Harry, wait a minute, she's almost there. When I give the word, push with all your might, and then pull like mad. Are you ready? Off!' The push did not send them clear through the belt of surf, the boat twisted and turned and kicked like a frightened horse. Through his set teeth Dick kept panting, 'Pull like mad, Harry! Pull like mad!'

They were covered with spray, and the water foamed into the boat; then they shot out into the stream, the current gripped them, bent the boat round, and they flew like an arrow smoothly and swiftly.

'The left oar! the left oar!' screamed Dick. 'Here she comes like a railway train—take care, take care—slide up to her, and go along with her!' Dick's voice became hushed. 'Now, then, Harry, grip hold of the sail—steady! Give me the painter!'—and he made the boat fast to the rudder-bolt of the *Isis*.

They paused to get their breath, and drew their hands across their dripping foreheads, shipped their oars, and sat panting. On they rushed, side by side, the towering wreck and the little boat. They scarcely had time to regain their breath, to take one searching look up at the sloping deck of the *Isis*, and for Dick to mutter, 'What's the next move?' when they received an unexpected answer—a blow, that made the *Isis* shake in her whole length, that sent the felucca spinning forward, dislodging the boys from their seats, till, being brought up by the painter, she gave another kick—a splitting crack, and the dahabeeyah was fast on another rock.

The boys picked themselves up and looked at one another: one moment they thought that the huge bulk of the dahabeeyah, with its upturned deck, would topple over upon them; but no, she was fast and motionless. The rushing current lapped her shattered bulwark, and the felucca strained forward to the full length of her tether.

'If the painter snaps we're done for!' cried Dick. 'Make fast another rope, Harry.'

When all was secure they looked round and took stock of their position. The felucca was lashed to the stern of the *Isis*, whose deck rose above them like the steep roof of a gabled house; almost over their heads hung the stern cabins and upper deck, swept bare of ladder and rails. The mainsail lay on the deck, but had shifted downwards and dragged beside them in the water, its great spar lay quite across the deck and projected beyond the side. The fore-part of the vessel presented much the same appearance as it did immediately after the storm, excepting that the bows were now shattered, and the splintered stump of the foremast, instead of pointing upwards, now, from the position of the vessel on its side, pointed outward, almost horizontally. The hatch of the hold was still securely held in place by its iron bars—the tarpaulin had completely disappeared.

(Continued on page 122.)



"He made the boat fast."



"A turbaned head appeared through the opening."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 119.)

HOW to ascend the almost perpendicular deck and get to the stern cabins was the problem which the boys now set themselves to solve. To get a good footing on the broken bulwark was the first step. This could be done by means of the sail; then by working along by gripping the sail and any cordage that remained secure to the yard, this spar, which now stood almost upright, might be reached. Dick was sure he would have no difficulty in climbing this, and when he was half-way up he would be opposite the entrance to the cabins; but a space of fifteen feet, or thereabouts, intervened, for the spar was almost amidship. How could this fifteen feet of almost upright deck be crossed?—that was the question, how to bridge this space? After two or three proposals, which were rejected as not being very promising, Dick decided that with a hatchet he could cut footholds and handholds in the deck, selecting the seams of the planks for the operation, and enlarging them. If he could thus bridge the gulf there would be little difficulty when he reached the cabins. There must, however, be no delay, the sun was declining, and darkness would frustrate all their plans.

A hatchet was to hand from the Professor's equipment. Dick slipped it in his belt, and made the venture. Drawing the felucca close to the side of the dahabeeyah, he scrambled on to the bulwark where it was sound. The sail slipped downward when he caught hold of it, but when he had got it stretched taut he managed to work his way to the yard.

The climb up the yard was not difficult. There were the rings and the rope that attached the sail to help him; and when he reached the desired position, half-way up the yard, he was above the sail, which had run down on its rings and which, with the bunching-up of its attachments, made a support for one foot. He twisted the other leg round the yard, leaned out, and commenced cutting his first foothold.

He was muttering to himself, 'Now we shan't be long!' when his foot slipped. He gripped frantically at the spar and saved himself in time, saying, as he wiped the perspiration from his forehead, 'Dick, my boy, that was a close shave! Slow and steady does it.'

The first foothold was cut, and the second and third. He found that it would be necessary to make them about a couple of feet apart, so that about eight of each would be required before he could reach the cabins. It was rather slow work from his cramped position; and, as he went on, the strain of his left arm (the supporting one) as he leant out and downward to cut the footholds was almost unbearable; but fortunately the slope of the deck enabled him to lean back and rest from time to time. Another point in his favour was due to the battered condition of the vessel and the straining of its timbers. The joints of the deck planking were in many places opened out, making the work much easier.

From below Harry watched him anxiously, fearing each moment to see a slip. Dick looked like a fly crawling on a wall. Would he never be done? Hurrah! His foot was on the ledge, he was across

and, with a wave of the hand, disappeared in the upturned cabin.

Dick entered, and looked round in bewilderment. owing to the position of the vessel on its side, everything was topsy-turvy. He found himself standing on the side of the entrance. The other side was now the roof, whilst the floor formed one side and the actual roof the other. The saloon was in the same condition: table and benches were upturned and in a heap, and the carpet had slid down over them; the swinging lamp now hung shattered against the right-hand wall. Dick was quite startled when, on looking up, he beheld the distorted reflection of his own figure in the roof: it was the mirror, which had been against the left-hand wall, but was now above his head; and on looking down he saw that he was walking on the cabin doors, which had been ranged along the right side.

He unlatched the door of Harry's cabin: like a trap-door at his feet it fell down and disclosed a scene that might have surprised Alice in Wonderland. He was looking into Harry's bunk, which stood head downwards. Immediately beneath him was the small round window in the vessel's side, which showed a pale-green light (being, in fact, under water); around it were scattered loose articles—the water-jug, a strip of carpet and a pair of shoes—and, standing guard above it, Harry's camera, which had been left in the corner by the door and had fallen upright to the bottom—tripod, camera, and focussing cloth—and, with legs wide spread, appeared to be taking a photograph of the apartment.

Dick scrambled to the bottom and wrenched off the floor-boards they had been in the habit of removing—now no longer in the floor but upright in the side—and thrust his head and shoulders through. Here the same disconcerting change appeared. The four feet which he had been used to drop was an inverted space. The distance was the same, but it was to an opposite wall, and beneath and above gaped a great chasm, lost in darkness. Dick, for the moment quite unable to identify the surroundings, shouted loudly, calling on the dervish, 'Omar, Omar! are you there?'

Dick heard a slight movement, then a voice from the depths below, explosive exclamations, and a stream of rapid Arabic. The dervish, terror-struck at the storm and shocks of collision, had narrowly escaped death when the vessel rolled on her side, throwing the loose cargo violently in all directions; but by piling up the baggage and climbing on it had succeeded in reaching the hole through which Harry fell the night he sprained his ankle; but, pushing through, he slipped and fell to still greater depths between the upturned decks, and lay there bruised and hopeless. Dick peered into the darkness, but could not see the bottom nor distinguish the form of the dervish; nor could he make out any beams or projections in the sides that would afford foothold. He made his way back to the entrance of the cabins and waved his hand to Harry in the felucca below, shouting—

'I have found him, but he's down a deep place between decks and I can't get at him—I'm going to try a rope.'

There was no difficulty in finding a rope; one hung, almost to hand, from the mainmast. He hauled it in through the block, cut with his hatchet what he thought sufficient, and having made a noose at one end went below again. Fastening the rope to an iron post that supported the roof of Harry's cabin, he lowered the noose and shouted.

'Omar, old chap, lay hold, put this noose round you—under your arms, and I'll try and pull you up. I expect you're jolly heavy, though. Try and scramble up the side somehow, and I'll pull in the slack. See if you can find any holes in the side or some beams and things sticking out: or perhaps you can come up hand over hand.'

The dervish could not understand one word of these directions, as Dick well knew, but he was as active as a cat, and given a rope he knew how to make the best use of it; so in a few moments Dick heard hard breathing, and a turbaned head appeared through the opening. Delighted at his success Dick laughed and clapped the dervish on the back.

'Bravo! old chap,' he cried, 'you can climb like a monkey. Come on, I'll show you the way: the door's in the roof in this house, and the window's in the floor. Wait a minute, I'm going to take the camera—just hand me up that three-legged thing: now we shan't be long.'

When they emerged from the cabin and the dervish saw the river and the sky and the setting sun, it was his turn to laugh, which he did with quiet glee. Harry down below set up a hurrah! The dervish raised his arms to the sky and took in a deep breath, and when he saw the sun—the white-hot sun—sink to the horizon, he went on his knees in the entrance to the cabins, the palms of his hands outstretched before him, then crossed his arms on his chest and bent his forehead to the deck. Turning to Dick he addressed him in words sounding like prayer. Then observing figures on the opposite shore, he pointed in the direction of the south—smiled again—and to Dick's astonishment sat back on his heels and slid right down the steeply sloping deck, leaped on the low bulwark and sprang, clear of rocks, into the river. Dick gazed in amazement: Harry jumped up in the boat, his neck outstretched, his eyes fixed on the water. A black face and shoulder appeared in the rushing current, swimming with ease. The dervish cut sideways from eddy to eddy, plunged through the boiling surf that rolled over the rocks, found footing on their jagged sides, stood on the top one moment and waved a hand, then turning, disappeared over the crest with his face to the south.

(Continued on page 130.)

THE ANTARCTIC PENGUINS.

(Published with Mr. Herbert Ponting's kind permission.)

MR. HERBERT PONTING, in his most interesting lecture on 'With Captain Scott in the Antarctic,' has a great deal to say about the Polar penguins, and the praise he gives them is very high.

He says these birds are wonderfully intelligent, very kind-hearted, and have splendid powers of endurance. They are very sociable, and stand about in groups talking, looking strangely like 'little old gentlemen in evening dress.' The penguin's life is full of hardships. Its home is away in the land of snow and ice, where there are no trees, no plants, no grass even. So the birds have to make their nests among the big pebbles which cover the shores, and as they have never known any other kind of nest they are quite contented with their carefully-chosen stones, and arrange them in circles on the hard ground.

They have some strange customs, one of which is that when a 'young gentleman' penguin wants to invite a

'young lady' penguin to be his wife, he brings her a small stone in his mouth and drops it gently at her feet, which means as plainly as any spoken words could, 'May I build a nest for us two?' and he looks at her with a question in his eyes.

If the bird says 'do,' he is a very proud and happy lover, and sets to work to make a nest. When the nest is made and the mother bird is sitting on her pair of beautiful eggs, she also is very pleased and proud, and a great deal of admiration is bestowed by both birds upon them. But sometimes the poor little mother has a very bad time while she is cherishing her eggs. A heavy snowstorm comes on, and it snows, and snows, and snows. The mother dare not leave her treasures, so she sits patiently there while the snow piles up around her. But the warmth of her body melts the snow underneath her so that the uncomfortable little bird is sitting in a puddle of slushy water.

Her lover has walked away (flapping his fin-like wings) down to the cold sea in search of shrimps for his mate, and sometimes when he gets back he cannot find her, for she is quite buried in the snow.

But the snow never lasts long in the spots which the penguins choose for their nests, as the Antarctic is the most wind-swept region on earth, and in these particular places the snow quickly blows away. Very glad are both birds when it disappears and the father bird can find his little wife again.

And oh, when the baby birds come out of their shells, how sweet and pretty they are, very much like our baby ducks.

Then the proud father is kept busy, for he has three to fetch food for now, and sometimes he has a long way to walk. Penguins cannot fly—they walk just like tiny people, their feet being at the end of their bodies, so that they run along in an upright position. When they reach the water they are quite at home, for their feet are webbed and they can swim and dive.

When the babies are a few weeks old, and have all their feathers, they get like our own baby birds, anxious to 'see the world,' and as they cannot fly away as our robins and sparrows do, they 'run,' and generally end in getting lost, for there are hundreds and hundreds of penguins in their country, all living in big groups.

So the babies get mixed up among strangers and cannot find their parents. But it is not really a very serious matter, for there are always lots of mother birds ready to adopt and take care of them, and when they are old enough, fathers who will take them to the water and teach them to dive and swim.

'Moulting' time is a very unhappy time among the penguins. During this period they cannot go into the icy water, as they would get dreadfully chilled and perhaps die, so they have to fast. Poor birds! they look very forlorn as they stand or sit about, with big bare patches on their breasts and round their necks, or in other places, and growing daily thinner and hungrier. But if they wait patiently, and are strong enough to bear their starvation, in about a fortnight's time their feathers come again, and once more they can dive into the cold water and feed plentifully upon the delicious little shrimps.

The penguin has only one enemy on land (for there are no fierce animals in the Antarctic regions) the skua gull. These birds are not really so big as the penguins, but they have the advantage of being able to fly. They are dreadful thieves, and should the mother penguin

leave her eggs for just a few minutes to take a short walk along the shore and have a chat with a neighbour, it is very likely that when she returns she will find her nest empty, and she knows that the robber is the skua gull. And even if she arrives in time to see the thief cleverly picking up the egg in her mouth, the poor little mother is helpless, for her foe can fly and she cannot.

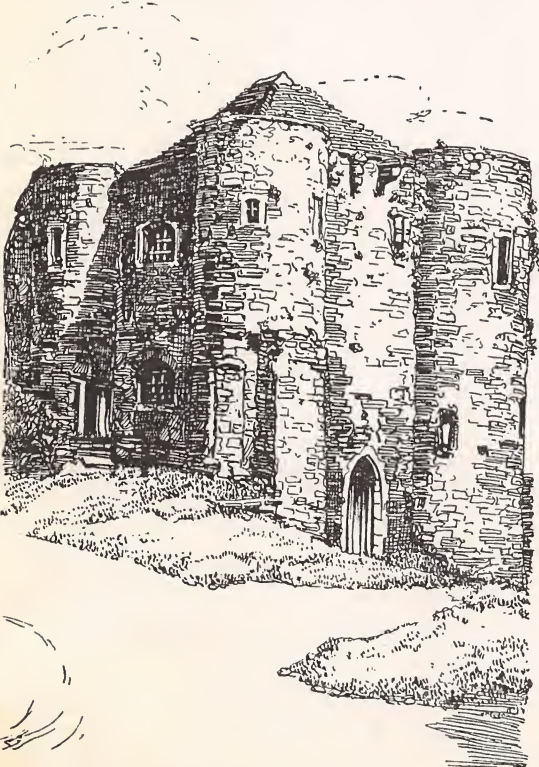
The next time she has a pair of beautiful eggs she will probably be more careful and watchful, so that such a calamity shall not occur again.

M. E. MORRISON.

THE OLD TOWNS OF ENGLAND.

II.—THE STORY OF RYE.

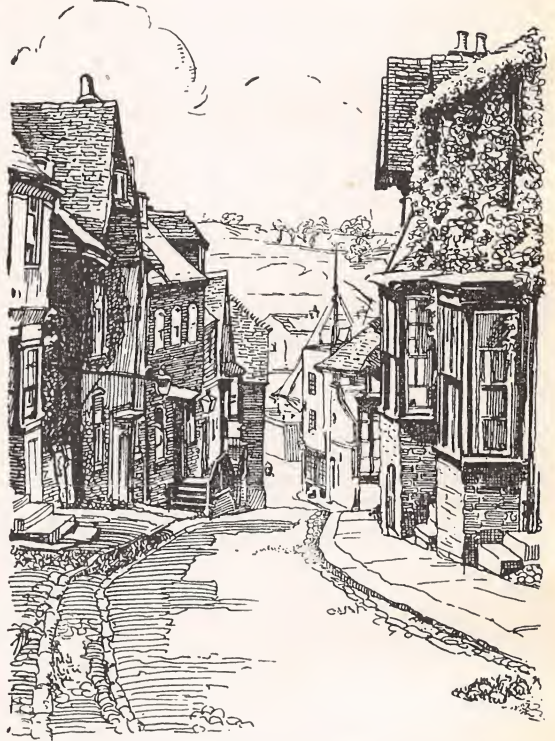
ALONG the flat, marshy land which bordered the south of Britain the Romans built a chain of forts to protect the shore. For many years after their departure from the land there were fortifications on this part of the coast. Most probably these stood on the same places as the earlier ones. They would have been chosen with great care, as it was constantly necessary to repel attacks by foreign invaders. By the time of Edward the Confessor these became known as the Five or Cinque Ports, and their names were Dover, Romney, Hythe, Sandwich, and Hastings. To these were added, after the Norman Conquest, Rye and Winchelsea, and they were known as the Two Ancient Towns. This title is still in use at the present day on official notices.



Ypres Tower, Rye.

Rye was then a small rocky island close to the shore. It had considerable trade with France, as certain rights in the land had been presented to the Abbot of Fécamp in Normandy by Edward the Confessor.

Unlike its sister town of Winchelsea, that stood on a rocky headland about two miles away, Rye did not



Mermaid Street, Rye

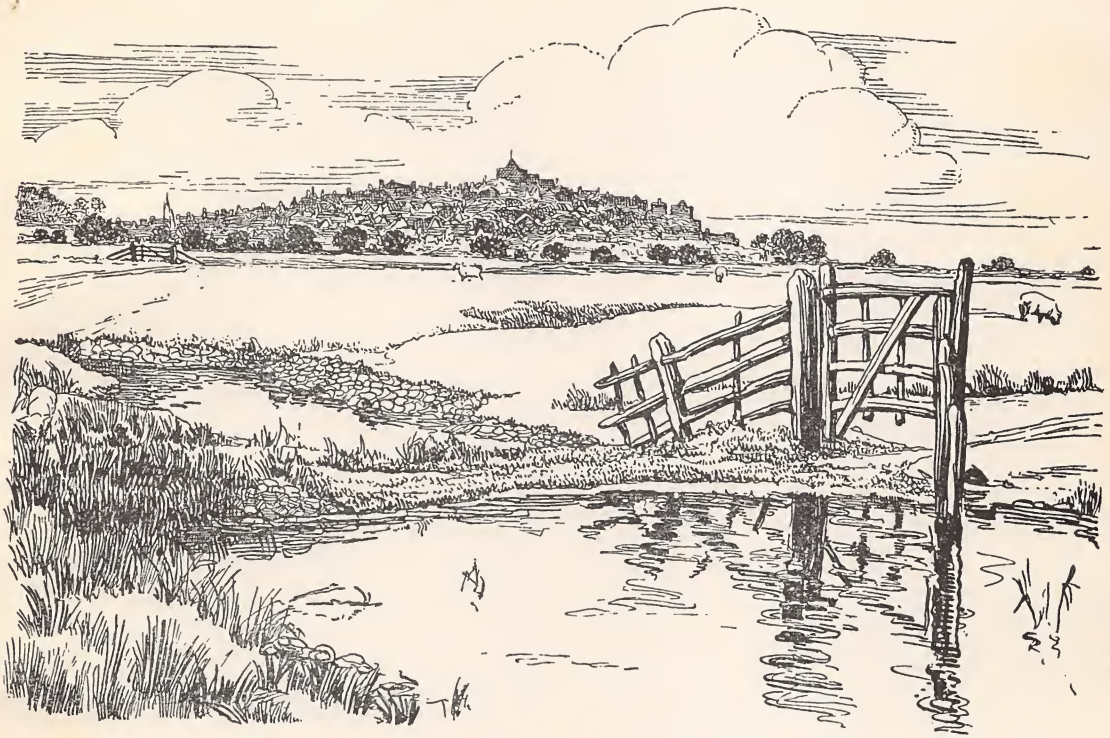
become an important naval port, and never contributed more than three ships to the Cinque Ports Fleet. Its inhabitants, from the first, seem to have been chiefly interested in trade. This was largely in wine, brought from Gascony, and there were also important herring fisheries. In later times a great deal of timber was brought into the port, and boat-building is still one of the industries of the place. The town was, however, fortified to a certain extent, as in the Middle Ages it was never long free from attacks by the French.

There were three strong gates, and on the south side, looking out across the sea, was a large stone watch-tower, known as the Ypres Tower (pronounced, locally 'Wipers'). It was built by William of Ypres, Earl of Kent, in the reign of Stephen. The small garrison kept a close look-out for the enemy's fleet, and when it was seen to be approaching the warden gave orders that the watch-bell, that stood close by, should be rung to alarm the inhabitants and to call them to prepare for defence.

In August, 1350, a great sea-fight took place in Rye Bay, against a large Spanish fleet. It ended in a victory for the English, and twenty-six of the enemy's galleons were captured. The ships were so close into the shore



AN OLD ENGLISH SPORT



Rye, from the Marshes.

that the people in the town were able to watch the fight from the walls, amid much excitement.

Several times the town was visited by the Plague, and it caused much destruction, many people falling victims to it.

The distance across the English Channel being so short, a great many French Protestants took refuge in Rye after the terrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572. Six hundred and forty-one refugees arrived within three days of the massacre, and by the end of ten years there were one thousand five hundred and thirty-four living in the town. The inhabitants felt no malice for their own treatment by the French in earlier times, but received these people with open arms, doing all they could for their comfort.

They allowed them to start their own industries, and they soon became part of the life of the place. Many French names are traceable in those of the people to-day. Queen Elizabeth paid a special visit of three days to see the refugees, and to show her sympathy with them she named the place Rye Royal. For some time after this the Rye fishermen, known as Rye Rippers, were allowed to supply the Royal household with fish.

A great deal of smuggling took place at Rye, and many are the tales told of the daring exploits of the smugglers. Silk, wool, and Valenciennes lace were among the things brought into the town in this way. Boats from Rye would set sail at dusk, and in mid-Channel meet the boats from France and transfer the goods to their own vessels.

When the sea receded from the surrounding marshes, Rye, unlike Winchelsea, was not left completely high and dry upon the land. The continued changing of the coast-line altered the course of the river Rother, that had flowed into the sea near by. It made for itself a new channel at the foot of Rye, and this was able to be used for a small harbour, and is still in use at the present time. This prevented the place from falling into decay, and enabled it to become the busy little market town of to-day.

Its appearance, as it rises like an island from among the marshes, is quite unique. The houses with their red roofs completely cover the hill, and it is crowned by its ancient church, the largest in Sussex.

The early church, built by Edward the Confessor, probably stood a little way away from the present building, near the spot known as the Gun Terrace. It must have been made chiefly of wood, and many pieces of ancient piles have been found about there.

The church now existing was built in Norman times. This is shown by the tower and the round-shaped arches in the transepts; much of the rest of the building belongs to the Early English period of architecture (about 1150 to 1250) and is of great interest.

The clock, upon which two gilt cherubs strike the hours, and which has a large pendulum that swings to and fro inside the church, is said to have been given by Queen Elizabeth.

The Landgate is the only gate that still exists, but the Ypres Tower is in a good state of preservation. The

Watch Bell has long since disappeared. It stood at the end of what is now known as Watchbell Street, and is one of the most picturesque parts of Rye, with its quaint old houses and cobble stones.

Another old street is Mermaid Street, with its famous inn of that name and its beautiful timbered hospital.

In this street lived Samuel Jeakes, a well-known Rye worthy, born in 1623; he was a lawyer and an antiquary. His son, another Samuel, also lived there and dabbled in astrology and other strange sciences. The grandson, the third Samuel, invented a flying machine. After many experiments and much trouble he could not succeed in making it fly, and in one attempt it nearly succeeded in killing him. Their house is still in a good state of preservation. Remains of several old monasteries are to be seen scattered about the town, and also the old school-house.

Wandering, to-day, among its quiet old streets, and among the precincts of the church, it is difficult to realise how this little market town had once looked out upon the sea, and had seen many strange ships and their strange doings upon the waters that had washed against its very sides.

RUTH COBB.

A SECRET KEPT FOR EIGHTY YEARS.

MANY of Francisco's friends wondered why he spent his time looking over a lot of stupid old maps in the library, and reading fusty old manuscripts; but he was searching for something.

When a door is locked and no one can get into the room, the wisest man is the man who spends his time looking for the key. That is what Francisco was doing.

He had heard, like everybody else, that nearly four hundred years ago there had been famous emerald mines at Somondoco and Cosquez, in Columbia—which, as you know, is in South America—near the neck of land where the Panama Canal now is. The place belonged to the Spaniards then; but many years had gone since the Spaniards were able to work them properly; for there were always quarrels and wars in that part; so, as men were too busy at fighting to do much mining, the mines got neglected.

Then there came a great war in which the Columbians tried to force Spain out, and kept it up till the Spaniards had to go; but it was such a hard fight, and it was so dangerous to be up there in the mountains all alone, or in little unprotected bands, that everybody but the natives came down from the mountains in order to be safe. Even then most of them got killed; and the struggle lasted so long, year in and year out, that these mines were forgotten. When people did think about them afterwards, they had vanished.

I believe that the natives, who hated the mines because they were cruelly forced to labour in them like slaves, had gone to work to hide the entrances. You only want a few rocks tumbled down to block up a tunnel, and a few years of storm and mud and dust, and any openings would soon be lost sight of.

Anyway, when they wanted those mines, they were lost. They hunted for them everywhere. Eighty years went by, and still they were undiscovered. The people who remembered them were dead; the natives, who had kept the secret, had died too; and in eighty years' time it was mentioned that, long ago, people had told a kind

of fairy tale about two great mines being somewhere in the far-away mountains, where precious stones could be found.

'Fairy tale!' Francisco did not think it was a fairy tale. He believed it; and what he was looking for in those old maps and books was for some mention of Somondoco and Cosquez that would be just some little hint; so that he could get 'warmer and warmer,' as the children say, as he tried to find those old mines; for that was what he had made up his mind to do.

At last he thought he had picked out some hint of the place, and into that place, up in the mountains, he went. Month after month he climbed and he walked, looking here, looking there; but it was no use. Wherever they were, they were hidden. Rocks had fallen from the mountain-sides, dust and sand had covered them up, and there had been eighty years of storm and wind and dust and dirt to do the covering.

Of course he gave it up? Well, that is just what he did not do. Although he grew quite certain that it was no use looking for the mines themselves, it suddenly struck him there was another thing he *could* look for. It stood to reason that, wherever those mines had been, they had wanted water to wash the earth from the precious stones; so he went looking for some great trench or ditch by which the water must have been brought.

Fifteen miles distant he found the river from which, common sense told him, it must have come; and every opening by which the river seemed to go in landwards he followed. Again and again and again he was disappointed; but at last he found one opening that seemed to have some remains of stone and mortar about the banks, and he followed that.

Mile after mile he tracked it. In many places it was filled up by years of mud and filth and the decay of leaves and trees; but it grew more and more certain that a trench it was—a man-made trench—that he was following; and every mile brought him nearer to the mountains. Then, when at last, after fifteen miles' tracking, the trench stopped, he said to himself, 'The place must be near here.'

At once he got to work, with the help of labourers, digging all over the place, and presently he found a great stone basin (called a reservoir) that had been built in the old days; and he knew that he was very near now, and that any further search would not be wasted.

Neither was it. Presently, in digging, they found the mouth of a tunnel; and tunnel after tunnel was discovered, till they had come across thirty, most of them very long—even miles in length. So there at last, after the secret had been kept for eighty years, this young man's patience, perseverance, and common sense wormed it out; and the day on which he found the great mine at Somondoco, Francisco felt rewarded for all his trouble, for he stood the richest man in the country. He had re-discovered an emerald-mine that they think is so rich in precious stones that it will perhaps give up one hundred millions of emeralds.

All that was a good many years ago now; but still they are working those old mines and bringing forth the beautiful, costly green stones that are so prized.

But, though the secret of Somondoco has been wormed out, the other great mine at Cosquez is still lost. Nearly a hundred years it has been missing.

I wonder who will find it!

CHARLES HERBERT.

A TEST OF COURAGE.

'YOUR brother *must* be a coward!'

The jeering speech echoed mockingly through the schoolroom, and immediately all heads were turned in the direction of Olive Riley, as eleven pairs of eyes watched eagerly to see how she would defend the attack.

She had sprung fiercely to her feet, and was facing Eileen Littledale in the big window recess, her eyes blazing with anger, and her whole body quivering as she almost hissed the words: 'How *dare* you? If you say that again I'll—'

The door opened suddenly, and Miss Black's voice fell chillingly on the ears of the excited group of girls.

'Eileen Littledale, your mother has called to see you. She is in the drawing-room.'

A smile hovered round Eileen's mouth, as her grey eyes shot a parting glance of triumph into the angry blue ones; then she turned away, and followed the head mistress out of the room.

Olive walked over to her desk, and picking up the poetry book that lay on it, began turning over the leaves with trembling fingers. Paul—her only brother and her hero—a coward!

Eileen's derisive laugh still echoed in her mind, and in the heat of her indignation she longed to think of some way of convincing her schoolfellows that the accusation was a false one. Somehow Paul must prove his heroism himself, and she must make the opportunity for him to do so.

Olive rested her chin on her hand and stared across the wide expanse of playing-fields, as her brain worked busily. It was not till the morning 'break' was over, and the lesson-bell had sounded its warning of silence, that the plan was thoroughly settled in her mind. The afternoon was a half-holiday, and Paul was going straight from school for a fishing expedition. He had hired a boat, which was to be in readiness for him on the beach, and was going to row out to the open sea and anchor there. Olive had arranged to go down to the beach to bathe with several other day-girls, Eileen among them, so that everything fitted in to help forward her plan. Paul was a splendid swimmer—she would only have to get out of her depth for a minute, and scream for help, and he would plunge in and rescue her, just like people did in books! There was only one difficulty. Her brother usually anchored his boat half a mile or more from land, which would be too far for her purpose. She must somehow manage to see him before he started, so that she could persuade him to keep near the shore till after their bathe.

Early after lunch that afternoon, a flying figure might have been seen speeding along the beach towards the little cove where Paul's boat was awaiting him. Olive gave a sigh of relief as she caught sight of it, and knew that he had not yet started for his expedition; but as the minutes went by and still there was no sign of him, she began to get impatient. Clambering over the edge of the boat, and across the seats, she curled herself up in the bows, and unfolding a bundle of oilskin that lay there, pulled it over her to screen off the hot rays of the sun.

The boat rocked gently to and fro as the wavelets splashed against it, and, though the glare was shaded from her eyes, she shut them drowsily as she listened to the cries of the eddying seagulls.

Soon the sounds became fainter, and the murmur of the sea seemed to grow soft and low like a slumber-song, as the rocking lulled her into a dreamless sleep.

Half an hour went by before Olive opened her eyes again, and, uncurling herself from her resting-place, shook off the oilskin covering; then, as she looked around her, her heart seemed almost to stop beating. Far in the distance she could see the familiar beach, covered with little black specks; but she was drifting farther and farther away from it—floating defenceless and alone into the open sea. Olive had never learnt to row, but she immediately picked up the oars and tried to pull the boat round. The current was strong, and in spite of the energy she put into her efforts, she saw that she was not even preventing herself from being carried outwards. It seemed to her afterwards that hours went by before she first caught sight of a little boat making rapid headway towards her, and then, as it came nearer, her heart gave a great bound of joy.

It was Paul!

A few minutes later he was at her side, but his face was as anxious as her own, as he struggled to pull the two boats against the current.

'I was fishing over there,' he explained, nodding his head towards a buoy in the far distance. 'I saw this boat, and thought I had better come straight away, but I don't believe we shall ever get back.'

The minutes went by, and he struggled manfully on, but Olive saw that they were making hardly any headway, and that Paul was getting gradually exhausted. Her courage was beginning to fail, when suddenly he dropped the oars and sprang to his feet with a joyful cry. Olive followed the direction in which he was pointing, and saw a little black speck getting bigger and bigger as it came towards them. Then with a cry of delight, she clutched her brother's arm. 'Paul! it's the Littledales' motor-boat!'

'Oh, Olive, I'm so glad! I'm so frightfully glad!'

Eileen put her arms round the trembling little figure as she helped her into the boat, then sat down beside her, and began pouring out a torrent of words.

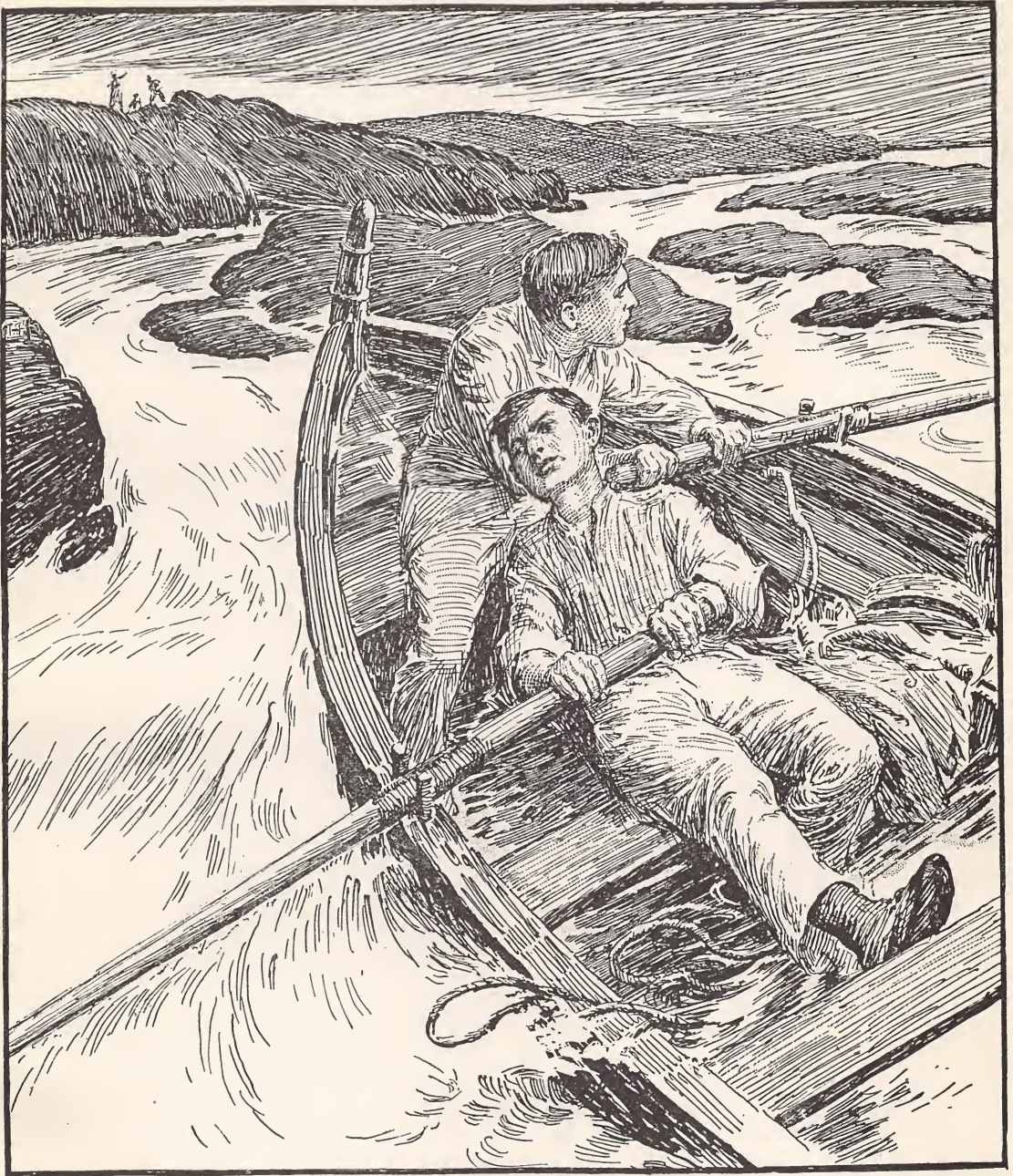
'It was all through me, and you might have been drowned! I let the boat loose—of course I didn't know you were in it; but when I was going along the beach, I saw Paul coming down from the cliff, and then—I know it was hateful of me, but I wanted to annoy him—I untied the boat, just for the fun of seeing him wade in for it. I was running off to watch from the cliff when Mother met me, and gave me a note to take into the village, so of course I didn't get back for half an hour, and then I saw what I'd done. It wasn't Paul's boat that I had untied at all. I could see him fishing right out beyond the green buoy, and then he began to row off quickly to the other boat. Oh, Olive, can you ever forgive me? I *have* been punished—you don't know what I've been through, and he *is* a hero! He's splendidly brave, and I'm so sorry I said he wasn't. I shall tell all the girls at school!'

Olive gave a grateful squeeze to the hand that held hers, but before she could speak, Paul's voice broke in excitedly: 'Olive, Mrs. Littledale's asked us both to tea! Isn't it ripping? We are not to go home and change, so we can play Red Indians afterwards in the garden, and have *real* paint!'

VIOLA VIVIAN.



"With a cry of delight she clutched her brother's arm."



“Those on shore followed along the bank, shouting.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINÉY.

(Continued from page 123.)

DICK was still gazing with wonder in his eyes at the spot, when there began to dawn on him the difficulties of his own position. The sun had sunk below the Libyan Hills, and a pale green mist was rising; before long it would be dark. On the bank opposite he could distinguish figures moving—doubtless the Professor and the Sheikh, anxiously searching for them. The passage across the waters of the Cataract must be made at once; it was dangerous enough in daylight, what would it be in the dark? Moreover, the dahabeeyah was none too secure; she might at any moment loose her hold on the rock and plunge on her mad career as before, or roll completely over and swamp the boat.

To descend the deck was not the difficult matter that ascending had been—he had simply to follow the example of the dervish, so, seating himself and holding the camera aloft, he slid, more or less gracefully, to the bottom and into the boat. The boys loosed the painter, and they shot rapidly along the side of the dahabeeyah, narrowly missing the rocks on which she was jammed, and were drawn into the streaming current. To edge across and avoid the sunken rocks seem'd more difficult than ever, and they were borne a long way down the river before they could get the shelter of a projecting headland where the water was comparatively calm.

Those on shore followed along the bank shouting, but whether in encouragement or warning the boys could not tell—they were far too much occupied with eddies and snags, and the sound of the surf as they neared the shore was too deafening.

At last they drove in between two rocks with a bump, jumped out in the shallow water and drew the boat up on a spit of sand. The Professor, the Sheikh, and Selim soon joined them. The Professor was much agitated. He had been alarmed when, on his arrival at the spot where he had left the boys, neither boat nor boys were to be seen. When the Sheikh pointed out the altered position of the *Isis* and two tiny moving figures high up on the deck of the doomed vessel, he turned pale, and when one of them appeared to fall from the height and, striking the bulwark, rebound into the torrent, the bitterness of his despair was painful to see; but subsequently, when the boat shot out from behind the wreck with two figures in it—unmistakably two figures—he was so relieved that he watched them threading the difficult channel with anxiety, it is true, but also with pride and admiration. Still, when people have had a fright they are generally angry, and he was prepared to give the two boys a good lecture.

'Boys,' he said, 'what do you mean by this? Have you no consideration for other people's feelings? What foolhardiness! What have you been doing?'

'We have saved the dervish, at any rate,' said Dick. 'He would have been drowned, sure enough, boxed-up there in the hold.'

'The dervish!' echoed the Professor. 'The dervish—I had quite forgotten him.'

'And so had we,' said Dick, 'only we remembered just in time.'

'Then that was the dervish that fell from the deck into the water,' said the Professor.

'He didn't fall,' said Harry; 'he tobogganed down the deck and took a header into the water, and got ashore all right—wonder he wasn't knocked to pieces, though.'

The last gleams of light had now faded; the purple of the surrounding country was turning to grey, the stars came out like jewels, the waters of the cataract rolled on—a purple torrent, flecked and fringed with the silver surf. A beautiful, reposeful night—Nature had quite forgotten her burst of fury.

'We must camp here,' said Uncle Charlie; 'we can't go back to the village, and if we did, there is no place we can sleep in—the houses are mere huts, dirty in the extreme and infested with mosquitoes, and the head-man's house is very little better. We can run up the tent, and get a few things from the boat. We shall do very well, if we can get something to eat and a cup of tea. Here, Selim, bustle about and do something for your living.'

There were only two things in the wide, wide world that the boys wanted—something to eat, and to get their heads down somewhere to sleep. This was their first night's camping in the open, and if they had been asked the next day how they liked it, they would have had to confess that they could not tell—they simply got their heads on a blanket, and the next thing was Uncle Charlie shaking them in the morning.

CHAPTER IX.

As they sat at breakfast next morning Uncle Charlie turned to the boys and said, 'We settled our sad business last evening at the house of the head-man of the village. The poor Reis is to be buried in the little cemetery. I wrote a brief account of the disaster for the owners of the *Isis*, and put it into the hands of the boatman to deliver. He goes to Assuan to-day, and catches the first boat going down the river. He will dispatch a telegram at Assuan to let the owners know without delay, and he will also post a note to Colonel Swain, to tell him that we are all right. The Reis—poor fellow—leaves a wife and child at Cairo: the owners will communicate with her, and I have asked Colonel Swain to find out her address from them and do what he can for her. Of the poor man who was blown overboard very little is known. The boatman said he joined the *Isis* the previous trip, and the crew knew nothing of him beyond his name; he thought he was a Cairo man, but did not know for certain. We could do nothing more: it is altogether a very sad business. We heard nothing of the three men who were put ashore on the other side of the river, but I have no doubt they are safe. I thought it my duty to lodge a complaint against that precious Sheikh of the Cataract—he was entirely to blame for the disaster. Any one could see that there was a threatening change in the weather, although we did not anticipate that it would be so terrible. He could have got us safely moored at Mahatta before the storm came on if he had done his duty. I suppose the wretch will talk about Destiny, and all that sort of thing. I don't know if they will be able to save the cargo; probably she will go to pieces before they can get on the spot. We must be thankful for our own

escape, and we must decide what is our best course to pursue. We are now about thirty miles from our destination, and unfortunately two miles of the cataract are still before us. I have been talking the matter over with the Sheikh; he knows the place for which we are bound, and strongly advises—

At this moment Selim, who had, after fussing with the breakfast, mounted a rock to have a look round, came bounding down in great excitement, crying, 'He's gone, he's gone! The dahabeeyah's gone!'

They all hurried to the higher ground, and looked out upon the river. Sure enough, no trace of the *Isis* was to be seen—she had, during the night, either gone to pieces, or been swept from the rock and carried down the rapids.

'Poor old *Isis*,' said Harry, 'we had some jolly times in her, didn't we? It makes one feel quite bad.'

They returned, and the Professor continued to discuss their plans. 'You must understand, my boys,' he said, 'that the Sheikh, here, is well acquainted with this part of the country—it is in fact, his native place—and he advises that we continue our voyage up the Nile in the felucca. He tells me there is a creek or small tributary of the river some distance higher up the Nile which would take us to within three or four miles of our destination; the only difficulty is this remaining two miles of the Cataract. The thirty miles of desert could be crossed by hiring donkeys or a camel, but it would be very expensive, and we should have to abandon the felucca. Personally, I feel that I have had quite enough of the Cataract for the present. I have got a fine water-colour of it at home, done by an officer in the Engineers—a very clever fellow with his brush: I admire it very much indeed; but of the real thing I've had enough to last me a long time. However, as the Sheikh says, our experience was quite exceptional—and well it might be—and he guarantees to navigate the felucca up the Cataract without exposing us to any danger. What do you say, boys?'

'I vote for the river,' exclaimed Dick. 'They say a shot never hits in the same place twice, so we're not likely to get smashed up with another sand-storm. It would be rather jolly, though—a tramp across the desert. It sounds good, doesn't it, Harry? I'd like to try a camel myself; it must be a bit of a lark, sitting up there on the hump.'

Uncle Charlie smiled. 'You will have plenty of desert before we have done, I'm thinking,' he said.

'As for the river, I'd take the felucca up myself,' said Dick.

'If I were young enough, and silly enough to allow you,' the Professor retorted. 'The Sheikh knows the Nile very well and—and there's not much that he can't do.'

The Sheikh had been smiling and looking from one to the other during this conversation, as though he understood every word. He now nodded his head, and tapping Dick on the shoulder said, 'That settle it, English boy Dick.'

Now the Sheikh's plan of negotiating the two miles of cataract was simple, if not agreeable—they were to do in a small way what the Nubians had done in the earlier stages. After lightening the felucca as much as possible they were to haul her with ropes up the rapids. Each one was to load himself with as much of the cargo as he could carry, make his way along the bank, and deposit it above the Cataract, and then return to the

work of hauling the felucca. This converting themselves into beasts of burden was indeed a weariness to the flesh, but it was accomplished with true Eastern patience before the heat became extreme. It was remarkable what a gift Selim displayed for selecting the large but lightest articles, and then groaning with the weight to cover his deception.

When they returned to the felucca there was still more cargo in her than the Sheikh approved, but he decided to venture the second part of the programme. This was to be done by tracking—two ropes were to be fastened to the boat, Uncle Charlie and the three boys were to man them, and the Sheikh, stripped of his haik, was to take his place in the boat and steer and punt her, and, as she drew little water, keep her as near the shore as possible. It proved no easy task, and the trackers were almost as much in the water as out. Where the shore was sufficiently level for the purpose the boat was dragged along the bank on rollers at certain points, to avoid some of the steeper rapids. Fortunately at this side of the river the bank was flat and sandy in places and admitted of this; on the other side, which was piled with massy rocks, it would have been impossible.

They hauled the felucca up on to the flat bank and pitched their tent. As the night came on the air grew very chilly; the boys felt the cold after tugging at the ropes in the heat of the day, and were glad to snuggle down in their blankets in the lee of the bank, and the second night in the open passed as the first had done, in one long, dreamless sleep.

(Continued on page 143.)

AN INTERRUPTION.

'GOOD morning,' said the Water Rat—
In friendly mood was he;
The Moorhen made him no reply,
She thought his manners free.

'I wish to have a little chat:
You're looking well, my dear!
Now tell me all the latest news,
For I should like to hear.'

Then gently Mrs. Moorhen said,
'I'm not inclined to talk:
I think, instead of chatting here,
You'd better take a walk.'

'On such a lovely day as this
'Tis well to stretch your legs;
I'm half afraid to trust you, quite
So near, sir, to my eggs.'

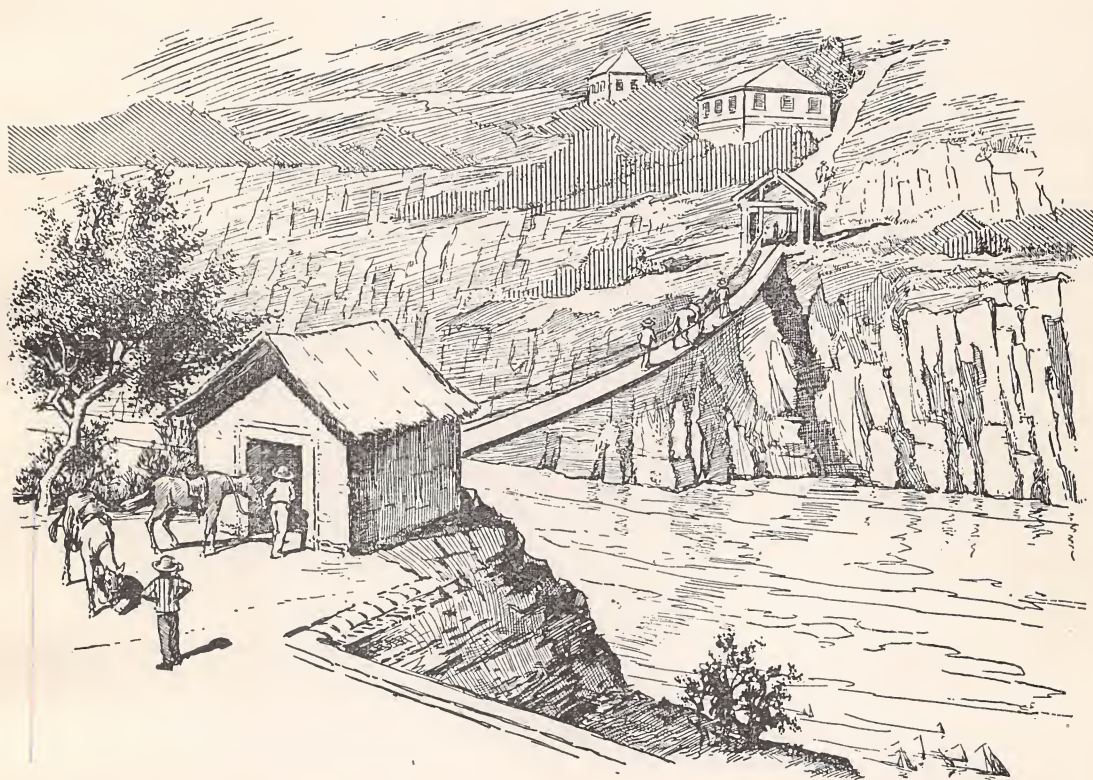
There came along a hungry pike,
His heart was light and gay,
He gave them both an awful shock,
And frightened them away.

'Ha, ha!' said he, and laughed in glee
To see their agitation,
'Tis very clear that I have spoilt
A pleasant conversation.'

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.



"There came along a hungry pike,
His heart was light and gay."



The Hanging Bridge at Toblachacha, South America.

ACROSS THE WATER.

V.—SUSPENSION BRIDGES.

A SUSPENSION bridge is, as its name tells us, one that hangs unsupported by piles or arches and there is no doubt that the earliest suspension bridges of all were the tangles of twisted creepers which, in the thick jungles of prehistoric days, flung themselves from tree to tree and across narrow rivers.

The men of those strange far-away days used these supports as a means of transit, when wishing to travel from one bank of a stream to the other, and when it was evident that the natural bridges would not bear their weight they strengthened them with additional twisted vines. This was the origin of the 'creeper bridge' which is made by savages in many tropical countries. An old book tells us that one of those primitive suspension bridges was seen by Frezier in South America, 'made of ropes formed of the bark of trees,' and other more modern explorers have discovered them in the dense forests of Asia and Africa.

As time went on, when men began to reason and to apply their knowledge, they imitated the hanging creeper bridges in more durable materials. Ancient suspension bridges existed in China, where this branch of architecture was carried to great perfection.

In Europe suspension bridges were of much later date, and, even in 1796, a writer on bridge-building speaks of them in very vague terms. 'Pendant or hanging bridges,' he tells us, 'called also philosophical bridges, are those not supported by posts or pillars, but hung at large in the air.' He goes on to say that Palladio mentions such bridges, and that Dr. Plot assures us that there was formerly a large bridge over the castle ditch at Tilbury, in Staffordshire, made of pieces of timber, none much above a yard long, and yet not supported with archwork or any sort of prop whatever.

After this period the science of engineering made great strides in England, and the suspension bridge across the Menai Straits, which divide the mainland from the island of Anglesea, was begun in 1818 and finished in 1826, while that across the Thames at Charing Cross, the architect of which was Brunel, was completed in 1845.

The most famous and the most beautiful of all English suspension bridges is the one across the Avon at Clifton, and the story of how it came to be built is very romantic.

In the eighteenth century a man named Vick was one of the Bristol aldermen. He saw that a bridge connecting the town with Leigh Down on the opposite side

of the river was badly needed, and when he died, in 1753, he left the sum of one thousand pounds for the purpose. He entrusted the money to the Merchant Venturers' Society, with instructions that it should be put out to interest until it had accumulated to ten thousand pounds. Vick planned that the bridge should be of stone, and he chose the site for it at a spot where the precipitous rocky banks of the Avon are nearly two hundred and fifty feet high.

For eighty years after the generous alderman's death nothing was done, but then, when Bristol was rapidly increasing in size and importance, the citizens remembered the legacy, and preparations were made for the benefactor's intention to be carried out.

It was soon found that a stone arch across the gorge would be very expensive, and so, as the Menai bridge had lately been completed with great success, it was decided that a suspension bridge would be more suitable.

Brunel was chosen as the engineer, and he prepared wonderful plans for a great bridge consisting of a single span, seven hundred feet in length, the supports of which were to be the natural rocks on either side of the river.

Of course the money left by Alderman Vick, which had now increased to nine thousand pounds, was quite insufficient for the building of this great structure, but other large sums were raised, and the work was begun in 1831. Many years, however, passed before much progress was made, and in 1853 it was found that the funds available were exhausted, and the work was abandoned for seven years.

Although, at this time, the bridge itself was still incomplete, it was possible for adventurous people to cross the gorge in a car, or basket, which was slung to the great iron bar which stretched from one bank of the river to the other, and was drawn backwards and forwards by a rope. We are told that, on one occasion, a wedding party decided to make the journey, and when the car was halfway across the rope broke, and they were left stranded in mid-air. Eventually the bride and bridegroom were rescued, but not until they had spent several hours in this alarming position.

The Clifton Bridge remained in an incomplete condition until 1860, and then, as the Hungerford Bridge over the Thames had to be removed to make room for the Charing Cross railway bridge, it was decided to buy part of the ironwork and take it to Clifton. This was done, and in 1864, thirty-three years after the first plans were accepted, and more than a century after the death of Alderman Vick, the beautiful suspension bridge was finished and opened for traffic.

Large as it is, the Clifton Bridge is by no means the largest suspension bridge in the world. It is far surpassed both by the Brooklyn Bridge and the New East River Bridge, which connect New York with Brooklyn, the span of the smaller of these two wonderful structures being fifteen hundred and ninety-five feet, while that of the more modern New East River Bridge is even more.

In addition to the elaborate iron suspension bridges, there are still some of a more simple type to be found in different countries.

Our illustration shows a very interesting bridge at Toblachacha, in South America. This hanging pathway is very narrow, so that at either end of it a little house is built where travellers wait their turn to cross, as it would be difficult and dangerous for two mules or horses to attempt to pass each other on the bridge.

A. A. METHLEY.

MODELS BUILT INSIDE BOTTLES.

YOU have probably seen glass bottles with models of houses, ships, and other objects inside, and wondered how they could be got in through the narrow neck. There are three ways in which this is done. Sometimes the model is built in pieces, but so made that it can be fitted together again by means of holes and pegs. A piece at a time is put into the bottle and fixed, with the aid of very long pliers, until the model is complete. The commonest method is to knock out the bottom of the bottle, put the model inside, and then cement the bottom on again, using a transparent cement, so that it is difficult to see the join.

Some of the more expensive kinds are made in a rather different way. The model is made solid and is put into a bottle that is only partly made. The bottom of the bottle is closed up afterwards, or the neck is made much smaller than the model that is supposed to have been passed through it.

In the case of fully-rigged ships, another device is sometimes used. The masts and rigging are hinged at the bottom, so that they can lie flat on the deck. Then the hull, with the masts flat, is slipped through the bottle-neck. A thread is tied to the masts, and, when the boat is inside the bottle, a pull at the thread drags the masts upright.

CUCKOO!

WE can hear you calling in the wood,
Cuckoo!
Just above the bushes where we stood,
Cuckoo!
We will follow when you answer clear,
Cuckoo!
But we wish you'd wait a minute here,
Cuckoo!
We scrambled up the bank over there,
Cuckoo!
We tumbled in the stream and didn't care,
Cuckoo!
We reached the hedge where you went to hide,
Cuckoo!
And then you called from the other side,
Cuckoo!
Shall we ever see you when you cry
Cuckoo?
Always when we get t.e.e off you fly,
Cuckoo!
If you're silent when at last we meet,
Cuckoo!
We shan't know the friend we come to greet,
Cuckoo!

M. ERNUIN.

THEIR WORD OF HONOUR.

SCHOLES and Tate sat in the little turret chamber of the ruined castle, smoking cigarettes. But even this forbidden joy brought no brightness to their gloomy countenances.

'The Head's getting worse than ever,' said Scholes, moodily. 'Regular old woman, he is. Mayn't do this!'

Mayn't do that! How much longer are we to be kept away from the village because he's afraid of us catching measles, or mumps, or housemaid's knee, or something, I should like to know?'

'Sickening!' agreed Tate. 'Not that it matters much to us, except the trouble of dodging. We were there yesterday, and if I run out of bacey I shall go again.'

'Mind you're not caught. We're no favourites as it is, and you will get it hot if you are. What between prefects and masters, a chap never gets a chance to enjoy himself. Hullo, what's that?'

The door was flung open, and Riley and Weldon, two of the juniors, ran in. On seeing the two they tried to retreat, but Tate was too quick for them. He slammed the door, and put his back against it.

'What do you kids want here?' he asked, angrily, uselessly hiding his cigarette behind him. Both smoke and smell gave away their occupation.

'Nothing,' said Riley. 'We're looking for Hale. It's hide-and-seek. We're going now.'

'Are you?' said Scholes. 'Don't be too jolly sure of that! Youngsters who come where they're not wanted don't go till they're allowed. I suppose you guess what we were doing?'

The two nodded silently.

'Then you stay here till you've promised not to sneak. Comprehend?'

'We're not going to sneak. It's no affair of ours,' said Riley.

'Perhaps not; but you don't go till you give your word of honour. In fact, while you're about it you may as well promise that you won't mention that you've seen us. That'll be safer.'

'We're not going to tell,' repeated Riley; 'but if we're asked we shan't lie about it for you or anybody.' His friend nodded agreement.

'Let's see about that!' As he spoke, Tate grasped Weldon by the arm, and gave his elbow a quick twist. 'Promise!' he said.

Weldon, a delicate boy, gasped with pain, but set his teeth. Riley sprang to the rescue, but a grip on his collar brought him up short.

'Stay where you are!' said Scholes. 'Now, young Weldon, speak up! Give him another twinge, Tate. Perhaps that'll loosen his tongue.'

Riley struggled furiously, but his strength was as nothing compared with the grasp that held him.

Tate gave the suggested twinge, but it was of no avail.

'Obstinate little beast! Won't you promise?' The words were accompanied by the worst twinge of all, and a groan broke from the boy's lips.

Riley could bear it no longer. 'Let him alone, Tate! Let him alone! I promise. Don't do it again. We won't either of us tell.'

'Your words of honour? Repeat after me: I swear I won't tell that I have seen Scholes or Tate this afternoon.'

Riley did so, and Weldon followed suit, with white lips.

'Now you can go,' said Scholes. 'Mind you don't let any of the other kids come here. And if you break your promise it'll be the worse for you.'

Outside, Riley pulled his friend down on to the steps. 'Sit down, old man, till you feel better. Oh! if ever I get a chance to pay those brutes out,' he whispered, 'won't I just jolly well take it!'

Five minutes later they joined their companions. 'Is he found?' asked Riley, hurriedly. 'He isn't in the turret room. Oh! there you are!' as Hale was escorted from one of the dungeons. 'I say, let's go into the woods; it's no sport barking your shins on broken staircases.'

'Or standing alone in gloomy corners waiting to be found, and wondering what's crawling down your neck,' added Hale. 'I vote for the woods, too.'

With a shout of agreement they all raced out into the sunshine.

The following morning the whole school was assembled when the Head rose at his desk. 'I am sorry to say,' he began, 'that in spite of my strict commands two boys have been seen in the village.'

Scholes and Tate glanced at each other, and their hearts sank.

The Head continued: 'I have it on reliable authority that Scholes and Tate were there yesterday afternoon.'

Yesterday afternoon! The faces of the two expressed nothing but injured innocence. What a lucky mistake! It was the previous afternoon that they had visited the village.

'Indeed, sir,' began Scholes, 'you have been misinformed. We spent the whole of our time yesterday afternoon in the ruined castle.'

The Head bent a piercing look on them. 'I am afraid, Scholes, from what I have observed, and from what I have heard, that your word alone is not to be trusted. However, if what you say is true, you should have no difficulty in proving it. I understand that a number of the other boys were also at the Castle yesterday afternoon. Doubtless some of them will have seen you.'

The two looked along the line of juniors—the juniors whom they never lost a chance of tormenting—and hope fell again. Weldon was absently rubbing his elbow, while Riley innocently sucked a pencil.

'Did any of you see Scholes or Tate?' inquired the Doctor.

In the chorus of 'No, sir!' which followed, no one—except Scholes and Tate—noticed that Riley and Weldon remained silent. The two bullies gnashed their teeth; they dared not call upon the youngsters to back them up. After the treatment they had received, if they spoke at all they might say too much.

The Head looked at them coldly. 'I regret I am again unable to believe you. I am also sorry that after my strict warning you have so little regard for the school that you run unnecessarily into infection. You may accompany me to my study, and afterwards you will be isolated until all fear is over.'

The doctor stalked from the room, followed by two depressed individuals.

'I say, Riley,' said Weldon, catching hold of his friend as the classes dispersed to the various rooms, 'what ought we to have done?'

'My dear chap, we gave our words of honour. We *couldn't* say anything. Don't worry. We shan't see anything of them for ten days or so, and after that,' Riley finished, comfortably, 'let's hope they'll develop measles.'

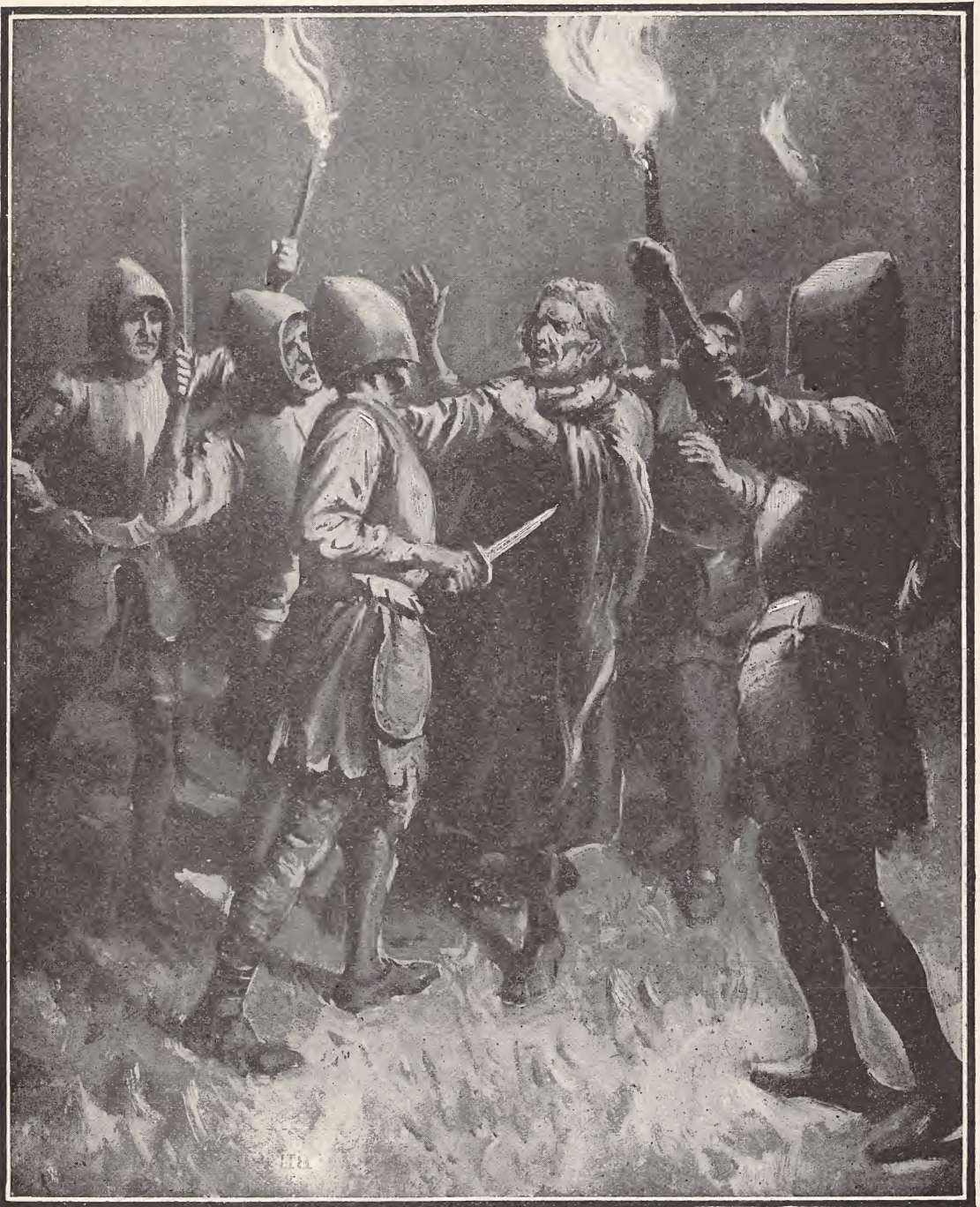
'But they weren't in the village, so how can they?'

'Where did they get their cigarettes, old man? The Head's only made a mistake in the day. Let's look slippy, or we shall be late for class.'

C. E. THONGER.



“He slammed the door and put his foot against it”



“The Governor went to the appointed spot, only to encounter enemies.”

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

The Tale of some Famous Sieges.

IV.—COURTRAI.

UPON the River Lys, not far from the French frontier, is the town of Courtrai; and, like most of the other Flemish cities, it has had a long and eventful history. Indeed, it seems to have borne its part in every great European war, from the time when it was first fortified in the tenth century by Count Baldwin, to the autumn day, a thousand years later, when the invading German armies marched through its streets.

Sieges, captures, massacres, the old town has endured them all, and, in addition, several of the great battles of history have been fought in its neighbourhood.

The first of these, called the Battle of Guingate, or the 'Battle of the Golden Spurs,' took place in the year 1302; and in it the Flemish totally defeated a large French army commanded by the famous and hitherto victorious leader, Robert, Count of Artois.

The French had invaded Flanders, burning and pillaging on their way, and the city of Courtrai was threatened. It seemed almost impossible that the advancing army could be successfully resisted, for it consisted of the highly-trained knights and men-at-arms of France, while the Flemish troops were chiefly burghers from Courtrai and peasants gathered from the surrounding districts. They were armed with spears and with long maces, which some writers say were simply ordinary plough-shares fitted into handles.

In spite, however, of primitive weapons and want of military training, the Flemish soldiers proved more than a match for their opponents. They were fighting for their homes and liberty, and were filled with determination to rid their country of the invaders.

'Think neither of prisoners nor of booty,' was the order given before the battle began, and old writers tell us a priest blessed the soldiers, who, as they knelt before him, each picked up a morsel of clay from the ground, and, kissing it, swore that he was ready to die for his fatherland.

'Let the enemy come, we are ready for them!' the brave men cried, as they rose to their feet; and then, early in the morning, the battle began, and did not end until nearly half the French army had been slaughtered and the remnants put to ignominious flight.

The leader, Robert of Artois, escaped from the battlefield, and tried to surrender to a monk in a neighbouring abbey, but the monk, who had, perhaps, heard the order given to the Flemish troops, killed him, with the words, 'We do not understand French, and we do not take prisoners.'

Thus Courtrai was saved from capture, and in one of the churches the seven hundred golden spurs, taken from French knights, which gave the battle its romantic name, were hung up as trophies. The remembrance of this terrible catastrophe lingered in the memory of the French, and eighty years later we find them exacting a cruel revenge.

It was after the Battle of Rosbeque, in which the French had entirely defeated a great Flemish army under Philip van Artevelde that the boy-king of France, elated with his victory decided to subdue and enter Courtrai. A party of knights and squires galloped on

ahead of the main army, and entered the town, no defence being made. Indeed, on this occasion, the citizens seemed to have lost all their old courage, for it is said that they hid, with their wives and children, in cellars, or took refuge in the churches. On December 1st the King of France entered the town, and then the alarm of the inhabitants appeared to have been well founded, for a great massacre took place, and no mercy was shown to the hapless townsfolk.

Froissart gives the reason for the relentless conduct of the conquerors in his Chronicle: 'The Frenchmen and they of that town hated each other mortally, because of a battle that was once fought before Courtrai, where Sir Robert Artois and a great part of the flower of France was slain.' The writer goes on to tell us how the fourteen-year-old King of France, having been shown the golden spurs hanging in the church, declared that the past victory should be dearly won, and gave orders that, when he departed, Courtrai should be burnt, 'to the intent that it should be known ever after that the King of France had been there.'

Strangely enough a second Battle of the Spurs was fought on the same spot in 1513, rather more than two hundred years after the previous conflict, the French, on this occasion, being opposed by an allied army of English and Germans under Henry VIII. and the Emperor Maximilian. The name was given this time, it is said, because the French used their spurs more than their swords in the battle.

In 1581, during the war with Spain, Courtrai was besieged, and it fell, owing to treachery on the part of the enemy. The account of this event is interesting, because it shows how, in that long and terrible conflict, British troops were fighting in Flanders side by side with their old allies.

It was in February, at the period when one town after another was falling into the hands of the Spaniards, and the garrison of Courtrai was weak, consisting, indeed, only of two or three Scottish companies. A letter, apparently sent by friends, was received by the Governor of the threatened city, and it contained an offer of additional troops to aid in the defence. These reinforcements were to be introduced into the town secretly by way of a little meadow that was situated near the castle.

Completely deceived, the Governor went out at night-time to the appointed spot, only to encounter enemies instead of the friends whom he had expected. The assailants entered the town, but there they discovered that an alarm had been given, and the Scottish soldiers were ready to receive them, drawn up in good order in the market-place. A fierce fight followed, which lasted for four hours, but the odds against the brave defenders of the city were hopeless from the first, and all the Scots were killed, together with many of the townspeople.

Courtrai was besieged by the French during the seventeenth century, in 1646, and a hundred years later its fortifications were demolished.

A. A. METHLEY.

'BE PREPARED.'

THERE is a fine incident told by Sir Hugh Gough in his *Memories of the Indian Mutiny*, concerning a native officer whose name was Kanow Khan.

On one occasion when they were about to engage the enemy, and when no one could tell if they would come out alive from the engagement, this native officer took

out his Koran—the Bible of the Mohammedans—and began to say his prayers.

Sir Hugh Gough proceeded to chaff him, and asked if he were afraid.

The native officer made the noble reply: 'No, Sahib! But a man should always be prepared.'

Sir Hugh Gough had the frankness and sincerity to refer to it as 'a quiet rebuke which I felt I deserved.'

It was indeed a noble utterance and truly Christian in its conception and expression. FRANK ELLIS.

GARDEN SPIDER.

IN a quiet, secluded corner
Where the bushes interlace,
In the shortening days of autumn
Garden Spider chose a place.

There he built his airy palace,
Lightly hung from spray to spray;
Hard he worked to make it perfect,
How he measured, who can say?

Every thread was straight and even,
Every join was safe and strong,
Not a ring or line was crooked,
Not a curve or angle wrong.

When at last his work was finished
'Neath a leaf the spider crept;
Tired and hungry, there he waited;
For a while, perhaps, he slept.

Buzz! the web has caught a victim,
Out he runs to make him fast.
Rich reward for all that labour,
Something good to eat at last!

EVA M. HAINES.

FORTUNATE FRITZ.

THIS is the story of a fortunate man. Although at the outset of his life he seems to have been rather *un*-fortunate, his very misfortunes became for him stepping-stones to success.

Fritz Körner was the son of a Swiss tailor, who wanted to make Fritz a tailor too. When the boy was about eight years old, his father married a second wife, who took a dislike to her stepson. Seeing that the child was unhappy at home, his father packed him off to a relative at Havre who was also a tailor. But Fritz did not care for tailoring, and his master, a violent-tempered person, first flogged, then starved him. Neither of these methods made the lad a better tailor, so his master gave up trying to teach him tailoring, and employed him as an errand-boy.

Fritz did not object to the change; running about all day was more to his taste than sitting and sewing.

One day, when he was out on an errand, he saw a troop of cuirassiers, whose brilliant appearance, fine horses, and martial air naturally attracted him. As he stood gazing admiringly at the soldiers, some one suddenly and savagely tweaked his ear. It was his master! Fritz promptly took to his heels, and never heeding where he was going, ran blindly on until he reached the steamboat pier.

Some vessels were just putting off down the river,

and there was such a crowd of people, and such a lot of carts and waggons, that the road was almost blocked up. Driven by terror of his angry master, Fritz leaped on board the nearest ship, dived into the first hole he saw, and hid himself behind a barrel.

As the frightened boy crouched there, he heard a tremendous hubbub over his head, and a voice, which to his excited fancy was that of his uncle, called incessantly, 'Fritz! Fritz! Fritz!' Every moment he expected to be discovered and dragged forth from his hiding-place. And presently the ship began to move! The boy started up, but at that moment he again heard the call of 'Fritz!' and quickly cowered down. Thus he was carried out to sea.

Worn out with excitement and fatigue, Fritz at last fell asleep, and slept soundly for some hours. When he woke up, he felt frightfully hungry. How was he to get anything to eat? He lay and listened. He heard the straining of ropes and spars, the splash of water against the ship's side, a heavy tread on the deck above his head. That was all, and as Fritz no longer heard the reiteration of his own name, he hoped that his master had quitted the vessel. He therefore crept out of his hole—getting out was not nearly so easy as getting in—and went up on the deck. It was now night, and few men were about. There was a man at the helm, and another pacing to and fro. Here and there were two or three other persons, but as the eyes of all were turned seawards, they did not see Fritz, who crawled along in the direction of a lighted cabin below. Nobody was in the cabin. The lad crept in, and found there some food, which he eagerly devoured. Then he flung himself into an empty berth, and was soon again asleep.

'Fritz! Fritz!' called some one.

'Here I am, sir!' cried Fritz, as he jumped up in a hurry. He had forgotten where he was, and by force of habit answered to his name.

An astonished man popped his head in at the door.

'And pray who may *you* be, now that you *are* here?' said the man.

Fritz looked as if he did not know himself. He rubbed his eyes, and stared about in bewilderment.

'Who are you?' asked the man again, 'and how did you get here?'

'I—came aboard, sir,' stammered Fritz.

'Oh, indeed! I suppose, if the truth were known, you are some young thief running away from justice?'

'Oh, no, sir!' said Fritz; 'I am not a thief. I *was* running away, but only from my master, who was going to beat me.'

Then the child told his whole story quite truthfully to the man, who happened to be the ship's steward. It was not he who had called 'Fritz! Fritz!' He *was* 'Fritz,' for he bore the same name as the little stow-away. Man Fritz now took Boy Fritz to the captain, and the story was told to him.

'Well,' said the captain, 'we can't get rid of this young rogue now, so we will just take him with us to the West Indies, and when we return we'll give him back to his master. Let him work out his passage.'

So the boy helped his namesake the steward, and he had to work pretty hard; yet he liked this kind of life ever so much better than a dull, sitting-still existence. The only thing that troubled him was the prospect of being returned to his hard master.

(Concluded on page 155.)



“ ‘And pray who may you be, now that you are here?’ ”



"Though pretending to be asleep, she is slyly peeping at them."

KEEPING AN EYE ON THE YOUNGSTERS.

FEW young animals are more playful than fox-cubs, as we shall readily admit if we are lucky enough to surprise a Reynard family at their gambols in a quiet copse or covert, where they indulge in the

most amusing antics, running, jumping, playing hide-and-seek among the roots of the trees, or pretending to fight. Sometimes the sham battle ends in reality, for the cubs, even at this early stage, have very sharp teeth, and if one bites too hard, his brothers and sisters are apt to retaliate. The white tip of their mother's 'brush,' or bushy tail, is a delightful thing to play with, from a

baby-fox point of view. In the scene depicted here, Mamma Fox has evidently had too much of a good thing, and has tired of having her brush pulled and her sharp ears nipped by her four mischievous children, and has taken refuge on the low-growing branch of the big tree beneath whose roots her burrow, or 'earth,' is situated. From her perch she is keeping an eye on the youngsters: though she is pretending to be asleep, she is slyly peeping at them, and would be ready at the least hint of danger to spring down, and hustle them into their nursery, which she and Papa Fox have scooped out for them, and have made it as cosy as possible.

She and Mr. Fox bring all sorts of dainties to the babies—many a poor little rabbit, who ventures out to feed or play when the summer dusk is falling, is carried off to the den, and numbers of plump chickens, ducklings and goslings, as well as leverets, game-birds, and all sorts of little birds go to stock the cubs' larder. Foxes, like weasels and polecats, can climb trees, and are as fond of robbing nests as any boy!

Very young or weakly lambs, fawns and kids, too, sometimes fall victims to 'Reynard the Fox,' when he is out on a foraging expedition for his family. Most of the raids on poultry-yards and game-preserves take place in spring and early summer, when there are probably four or five cubs, all blessed with good appetites, to be provided for! Rats, mice, insects, worms, and snails are also eaten by foxes, and they are very fond of fruit, as the fable of 'the Fox and the Grapes' tells us! In many vineyards in France and Switzerland these animals do much damage to the grapes. Sometimes Mr. Reynard joins in the family frolics, for he is a very affectionate parent, and keeps close watch on the burrow where his wife and family live, stealing cautiously to and fro in the dusk, or the brief darkness of the summer night, laden with tit-bits.

As they grow bigger, both parents go out to hunt for them, and later on teach the cubs how to catch food for themselves. Unlike rabbits, which live in great colonies in their warrens, foxes are solitary animals, and only one family inhabits the 'earth,' which is dug out by their strong paws, in the most favourable situations for the safety of their offspring. The cunning foxes contrive, if possible, to make the entrance under the roots of great trees, or among rocks and stones, where it is difficult for any other creature to pursue them. While the den is usually in a wood or gorse-brake, if a pair of foxes settle near the sea, they sometimes take up their abode in caves, or holes in the cliffs. In Kerry, where the farmers accuse the fox of carrying off young lambs and kids, the cubs are often reared in holes among the towering cliffs, and this is also the case in Cornwall and the west of Scotland.

The baby foxes are very unlike their parents at first. They are funny, fat, snub-nosed little creatures, and their coats are much darker in colour than the rich red-brown fur of their parents. Many foreign species of foxes vary considerably in colour, and their fur is much prized, particularly that of the beautiful white Arctic fox.

If taken young, foxes are easily tamed and are pretty and amusing pets, full of tricks and mischief, but their tempers are uncertain, and woe betide the fowls or ducks that get in their way. They often make friends with dogs, to whom they are related, as well as to jackals and wolves: but cats will not fraternise with them, as a rule, probably because they object to the strong 'foxy' odour.

A lady in Ireland had a pet fox, who became very friendly with a tiny Yorkshire terrier, with whom it used to play by the hour, catching it up in its paws, tumbling head-over-heels with it, and cutting all sorts of queer capers. They ate out of the same dish, and were close companions for years.

All sorts of curious superstitions exist with regard to foxes. In Ireland it is said to be unlucky to speak of them by their own name—they should be called 'Modhereen ruadh,' or 'Little Red Dog,' if one wishes to flatter them, and induce them to leave the poultry alone.

M. E. SARGENT.

THE CAT WHICH SAVED MARINERS.

A True Story.

KINDNESS to dumb animals always, in due time, brings its own reward, either in the character of the doer of the kindness, or in some act of importance in the life of him or her.

Few people realised this better than Captain Boynton and men of the schooner *Richards*, which sailed some years ago out of Key West for New York. When a hundred miles from the land the vessel went on fire, and, after a brave struggle to put it out, the officers and crew had to take to the only boat which the fire had not burned. After they had put off from the blazing schooner, Captain Boynton made them return, at great risk to their lives, to rescue a big black cat that the crew had named 'John Croix.'

His kindness was well rewarded; for 'John' was the means of saving their lives soon afterward.

A stiff gale from the north drove the boat along till, after tossing about in great danger for two days, it drifted among the islands to the westward of Key West. Then, in the heavy seas that were running, the boat was capsized before she made the shore, the bung came out of the water-keg, and all the provisions were lost in the sea. The men got ashore all right—Captain Boynton with the cat—but they had neither food nor water: and, after searching the little island, not a trace of a spring of fresh water could be found. Very tired, very wet, and very hungry, as well as despairing, they all lay down to sleep.

But, early in the morning, 'John Croix' awakened the captain by rubbing faces with him. Thinking he was frightened, Boynton petted him. 'John Croix' then went off a few feet and mewed to him over his shoulder, until the captain got up and followed him. With his tail up on end, the black cat led the way to a clump of mangrove-trees, the roots of which overhung the bank three feet above the high tide. 'John' trotted under the mass of roots, and began to purr extraordinarily loud.

Captain Boynton started to follow him, then backed out; but the tom-cat mewed so long and loud that Boynton got down on his hands and knees again, and followed him. After having crawled along for ten feet, he found 'John Croix' standing drinking at a rill of fresh, sweet water, about as big as a man's wrist.

The captain satisfied his great thirst, and then, going back, awakened the others and told them of 'John Croix's' discovery, to their exceeding joy.

But their wonder at the cleverness of the cat increased when, two hours later, 'John' came trotting along with a half-opened oyster in his mouth. Until the black cat had shown them all the way to food, as he had led them to water, none of them had thought of looking for

oysters, of which there were millions around the roots of the mangrove-trees.

Strengthened and encouraged with the food and water, the shipwrecked mariners set about patching their boat; and five days later, when the gale had blown over, they put to sea again, and luckily were soon picked up by a passing vessel bound for Charleston. On arriving at this port Captain Boynton presented 'John Croix' to a friend, who gave him a good and happy home till he died of old age.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 131.)

THE next morning the boys rose merry as larks, and keen for their breakfast; but of breakfast there was no sign, except Uncle Charlie on his knees struggling with a fire that would not burn. The Sheikh had gone off with the kettle to get water lower down the stream, where it was clearer, but Selim—Selim the cook—was missing.

'He is off somewhere on his own account,' said the Professor; 'after no good, I'll be bound. I must have a clear understanding with that young man,' and Uncle Charlie tightened his lips. 'Dear me,' he continued feebly, 'I had no idea how difficult it is to light a fire in the open air. All the small stuff burns out before the sticks catch. I arranged it all so carefully too. I've used half a box of matches at least.'

Here the Sheikh appeared, and between them the fire was soon set going. The kettle was hissing merrily, and Uncle Charlie was ladling out the tea—a spoonful for each and one for the pot—when Selim put in an appearance.

'I say, young man, do you think this is the right way to discharge your duties—leaving us to light the fire and get the breakfast? I must give you to understand that in future you will attend to these matters and not go wandering off on your own account without as much as saying by your leave, and—and no sticks for the fire and no water, and the tea-cups full of sand, and the condensed milk nowhere to be found, and—'

Selim put on an injured look. 'I go out fishing, get something nice for 'fess: r's breakfas—give you leetle surprise. Selim all right. You all get up too early.'

He was carrying a stick over his shoulder with something hanging from it, which he set down very carefully on a dish—a black slimy-looking object with yellowish spots. The boys looked at it curiously; it was not their idea of a fish, and the niceness did not appeal to them.

'It's a kind of tortoise,' said Harry.

'Him's delicious,' said Selim, screwing up his mouth and smacking his lips.

'It has got a snout,' remarked Harry, continuing his observations. 'It is quite different from the tortoises I have seen, which have blunt noses, and it looks flabby, as if it had just shed its shell.'

'It is a soft-tortoise,' said the Professor.

'Yes, mud-tortoise: him delicious,' said Selim.

'They don't eat them, do they, Uncle?' asked Dick, making a grimace.

'They are considered very good eating indeed,' replied the Professor. 'I've never tasted them, but I believe they are as good as turtle: we will have it for supper.'

'Why didn't you catch it alive?' Harry asked of Selim. 'I should like to have kept it. They will live any length of time if you give them proper food, and they're awfully interesting things.'

'Him alive enough when I catch him,' was the reply. 'Him awful fierce; him snap—bite fingers off like anything: him best in the pot,' and Selim laughed gleefully. 'Take you fingers away, Mister Harry, him bite dreadful.'

'He's dead enough, isn't he,' said Harry, surveying the long skinny neck and limp outstretched legs.

'Ah! him funny fellow,' said Selim, proud of his capture; 'him never dead till him in de pot. I know a boy—very nice boy—'bout as big as me—he caught mud-tortoise, and snap it bit his finger and made him howl, I can tell you. "I'll teach you to bite," he says, and he pick up chopper and chops 'is head off. He picks up de head and pokes his finger in 'is mouth. "Now bite, old chap," he says, an' sure enough it bit him finger right clean off!'

Harry did not always accept Selim's facts; but, for all that, he took his finger away hastily.

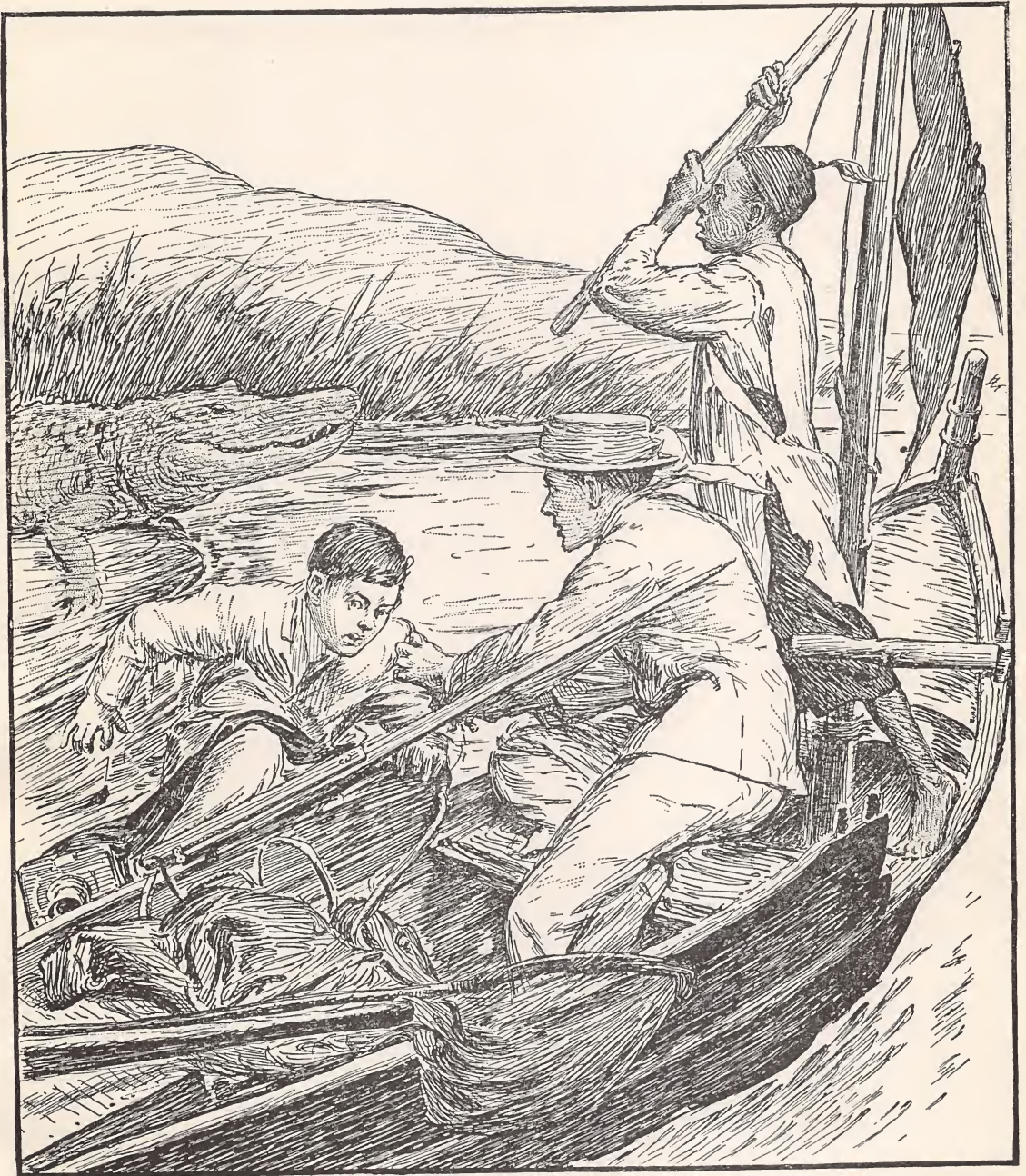
Rowing up the Creek was tame work after the Cataract. The wind did not serve them, as they had turned almost at right angles to the course of the Nile, and were going due west, as the sail was not hoisted. They dipped their oars into the almost stagnant waters of the creek, and pulled lei urly up its silent reaches. The oars touched the oily surface of the water with a tiny splash, which seemed to make the silence more profound: so different was it from the rush and turmoil of the torrent they had left behind. The low banks were fringed with reeds and rushes; in the bends of the stream these would spread out and cover an extensive area of marsh-land—the quiet haunt of innumerable water-fowl, which could be seen threading their way among the green alleys of the tall reeds, or with little jerks crossing the narrow waterways. Now and again a heron or crane flew over their heads with legs stiffly outstretched behind, and settled down in the reedy labyrinth, or took up an isolated position, and stood melancholy at the distant edge. Flocks of small birds rose hastily on the wing, scurried round in a semi-circle and dropped again. Vivid dragon-flies darted and glistened in the sun, and the ceaseless crink-crink of grass-hoppers rose from the banks. These were spots that delighted Harry, and he dreamed of long days spent in this happy hunting-ground. In places grew feathery tamarisk, date-trees, and willows; and here and there a group of palms: other parts of the banks were quite bare of vegetation; long stretches of mud and uninviting sand-banks jutted out into the stream.

Near one of the latter the Professor and the Skeikh wished to be put ashore. They had been holding a consultation in the stern, and gazing with interest across the sandy plain which extended beyond the fringe of vegetation bordering the stream. The Sheikh's forefinger had pointed again and again to a range of sandstone hills in the distance, from the water-level appearing low, but afterwards found to be almost mountainous. The two men stood up in the boat, and shading their eyes from the sun looked earnestly along the range of hills as if in search of some particular landmark; then they bade the boys pull in and land them on the sand-bank, and remain near the spot till their return.

(Continued on page 146.)



“He was carrying a stick over his shoulder with something hanging from it.”



"Harry and the camera went over the side."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 143.)

WHEN the two figures had disappeared over the bank, Harry thought his time had come: he persuaded Dick and Selim to skim along the margin and give him a chance further up. He seized his net, and was soon engrossed in making rapid passes at dragon-flies, or, dropping that weapon, diving his hand over the side to catch a water-beetle. His eyes were gleaming with excitement, he was having rare sport: beside the water-beetles he had netted two magnificent dragon-flies: it is true the wings of one were damaged, and it had to be discarded, but the other was a splendid specimen. The prize of the day was a solitary locust with green wings, measuring four inches from tip to tip. He popped these into his 'killing-box'—a canister with apartments to accommodate two specimens, into which was dropped one or two drops of strong liquid ammonia: a piece of perforated cardboard being placed over this kept the ammonia from damaging the wings of the victim, and allowed of the passage of the deadly fumes. He was quietly engaged on this operation when a cry from Selim caused both boys to start up.

'A crockdile—crockdile,' gasped Selim.

The boys had heard this cry before to their cost, and were wary; but it was no hoax this time. There on the bank, scarcely distinguishable from its muddy setting, lay the terrible reptile.

'Hist!' came the warning from Selim's lips.

The creature lay in the sun with its legs outstretched. Its eyes were shut, and in the imagination of the boys a horrible grin distorted its jaws. They gazed awestruck for some moments; then Harry whispered, 'Let me take a photograph of him,' adding dreamily, as if quoting from a book, 'as he is seen in his natural haunts.'

Without the slightest sound they reached for the camera. The legs of the tripod were stretched out in the awkward bottom of the boat, and Harry's head disappeared under the cloth. Dick and Selim scarcely breathed. The boat was as still as a rock. 'Right,' muttered Harry, reaching to insert the plate.

But 'The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley.'

The front leg of the tripod slipped on the curved boat planking, and Harry and camera went over the side with a desperate splash: the reptile slid forward and flopped into the water. Dick shouted and grabbed at the gasping photographer, whilst Selim raised the oar above his head and struck frantically in the direction of the crocodile: a babel arose that would have frightened any crocodile. Harry was dragged into the boat dripping and panting, and finally the camera was fished out of the water too.

This adventure was a damper for the time being, and when Uncle Charlie appeared on the sand-bank, waving a beckoning hand, and the boys pulled up to the place, they presented such a damp and melancholy spectacle that the Professor's eyebrows were raised in amazement, and the Sheikh smiled almost to the extent of imperilling his dignity.

They pushed off the boat, and Harry hung himself out in the sun to dry, so to speak; whilst Dick and Selim pulled the oars. When they passed the scene of the encounter, they poked about in the reeds with the oars, but saw no sign of their friend. The Sheikh told them that crocodiles very rarely appeared in the Nile so far north; in olden times they infested the river as low down as the Delta, but the growth of traffic and the rifle of the foreigner had driven them away south: probably the one they had seen was a venerable representative with strong conservative instincts, who objected, at his time of life, to changing his residence and habits. Selim entertained them with accounts of many methods of catching crocodiles, which the boys thought very ingenious, but did not feel tempted to put in practice, as they necessitated a too close approach to those terrible jaws; especially as Selim had to admit, though with reluctance, that his personal experience was small, for he had, in fact, never before seen a crocodile.

Another hour brought them to the end of the creek. It had grown shallower and narrower as they advanced, and now was lost in a reedy marsh through which it trickled as a tiny streamlet.

They stood now on the bank and looked out on a desert stretching as far as the eye could see north and south; the west was shut in by the barrier of the range of steep hills they had seen from the boat, no longer insignificant as it appeared then, but lofty, rugged and seemingly impassable. A sandy, stony wilderness lay before them, without vegetation, except that here and there where boulders outcropped a little scrubby growth appeared.

But what was that in the distance—away to the south? A clump of trees hazy and shimmering in the sunlight—an island in an ocean of sand?

The Sheikh, as he watched the eyes of Dick and Harry fall upon it, smiled.

'There we go,' he said. 'It is the little, little oasis. It is good place for the camp. There is water; there is fine shade from the sun under the palm-tree. All is beautiful—nice.'

Yes, there before them was the end of their journey—that tiny oasis floating in the desert.

'We must leave the felucca here,' said Uncle Charlie; 'draw her into the reeds, and cover her well with green stuff, or the sun will open her planks and ruin her. We will rest here till the cool of the evening. We have three or four miles before us across the blazing sand, and by some means or other all our provisions and equipment have to be conveyed. Each one must carry a heavy pack of what is absolutely necessary for present use, and to-morrow we must return for the rest. We can't carry these boxes: we shall have to open them and divide the things amongst us. There's the tent and beds, shovels and pickaxes, and all the tools, beside the provisions: we shall have to load ourselves up like pack-horses.'

'I have an idea,' said Harry. 'Couldn't we take out the bottom board of the felucca? It is all in one piece, excepting that bit at the stern, and it's shaped like a sledge at the bow. We could fasten a rope at each side and take it in turns to pull it, two at a time. Perhaps we could carry all the stuff in one journey, and taking it in turns would give us a rest. It wouldn't be half so bad as strapping a lot of things on your back, and a second journey might not be necessary. See, the board is turned up at the bow and wouldn't dig into the sand;

and when you come to think of it, it wouldn't take half an hour to put on a couple of wooden runners, and then it would would go quite easily.'

'That's rather a good idea, Harry,' said Uncle Charlie. 'I think it would answer. What do you say, Sheikh?'

'Good,' replied the Sheikh. 'Harry has a good think in his head,' and the Arab tapped his forehead.

They took out the bottom board of the felucca, fastened ropes to the sides, and found that on the level ground of the desert it would work admirably, and when with a little labour the runners were added, they had a very tolerable sledge. They loaded it with the provisions and equipment, all of which they managed to stow securely; then they sat down to rest and wait till the heat of the sun had abated.

The travellers started, Uncle Charlie and the Sheikh taking the first turn at the ropes, being relieved after a short time by Dick and Selim, and Harry found himself odd man.

It's your invention, Harry,' laughed Dick. 'You can be captain and walk beside with your hands in your pockets.'

Harry looked proudly at the contrivance, saying, 'It isn't a camel, but I christen it—the ship of the desert.'

'Then look out for rocks,' cried Dick, as the sledge on Selim's side struck something.

'Hold hard, Mister Dick,' cried Selim. 'Dat ain't a rock; dat my mud-tortoise, him slip down.'

'I wish we were not going so far from the creek,' said Harry. 'I should find a lot of things for my collection about there.'

'You're hankering after that old crocodile, I believe,' replied Dick. 'He'd make a fine pet if his mouth were sewn up. We will run over one of these fine days; Selim can catch him and operate on his mouth and we will bring him home on the ship of the desert.'

Harry did not mind being chaffed; he pursued the subject, 'Wouldn't he look fine stuffed, Dick?'

'Yes,' was the reply; 'but I have no mind to be the stuffing. I have no fancy for such ghastly cattle; now if it were lions and tigers—they're pretty blood-curdling—but I shouldn't mind them so much.'

It was Harry's turn to retort now. 'That's all very fine,' he said. 'You say that because you know jolly well there are none in this part of the world.'

Dick was silent; he thought, on reflection, that there might possibly be something in this remark.

Uncle Charlie and the Sheikh were again in harness when they neared the oasis. The boys found it much more extensive than they had expected. Its aspect in the twilight was solemn and impressive. Stately palms and date-trees lifted their heads to a height of sixty feet, their graceful fronds motionless against the sky. Sycamores and acacias threw deep shadows beneath—sombre depths which the eye could not penetrate. The stems of the palms, straight and leafless, were like the columns of a temple; the fading light of the sky between, arched with their plumes above, appeared like Gothic windows, and the dark masses of the trees below were perforated with points of light like glimmering stars; all was hushed as if in waiting for some mysterious event.

They pitched their tent quietly, as if afraid to break the solemn spell. A fire was soon crackling on the sandy margin, and a column of blue smoke ascended in the

still air, straight as the palms themselves, and was lost in the darkening vault over all. With the crackling of the fire they began to be merry. The Sheikh showed them a tiny rill of pure water at which to fill the kettle, and Selim was busy with his sleeves turned up. They were merry—was not the dish of the evening to be Selim's mud-tortoise?

(Continued on page 158.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

5.—CHARADE.

Found in the most ancient times,
Often sung in poet's rhymes;
Raised on high, and clothed in state,
Brought to death most desolate.
Plain and handsome, good and bad,
Wise or foolish, brave or mad.

Of in danger, of in storm,
Cold, when other folk are warm;
Watching, waiting, toiling hard,
Finding but a scant reward.
Slippery work, uncertain pay,
Brief night's rest and early day.

Brilliantly, intensely blue,
Sparkling like the morning dew;
Full of beauty, full of grace,
Dwelling in a humble place,
Seen but for a moment's space.

C. J. B.

(Answer on page 179.)

ANSWER TO GEOGRAPHICAL ACROSTIC ON PAGE 107.

Connecticut.

1. Connect. 2. I. 3. Cut.

THE OBLIGING ALLIGATOR.

IF, during eight months of the year, boys and girls required no food, what an immense saving that would be for their parents!

Alligators eat nothing during their hibernating season: that is, from September 1st to May 1st. For the remainder of the year, if in captivity, they have to be fed on meat.

When the creature has for ever done with food, because it is dead, it does not disappear; its skin is exceedingly useful to human beings. Alligators' skins are worth from two to twelve shillings each, according to size and quality. They are made into bags, purses, suit-cases, belts, and so on. From the teeth and bones, too, are fashioned cuff-links, paper-knives, and many kinds of cheap ornaments.

But it is not always necessary that the creature should be dead in order to be useful. Living baby-alligators are even more valuable than dead alligators. They are sold to museums and other show-places, and to people who adopt them as pets. It is said that the trade in alligators benefits the State of Florida to the extent of two hundred thousand pounds a year.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

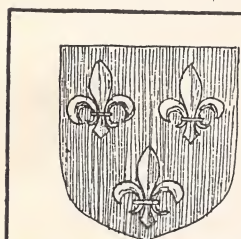
V.—THE FLEUR-DE-LYS OF FRANCE.



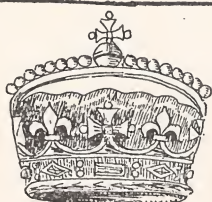
THE Fleur-de-Lys is, undoubtedly, the national flower of France, but when or why it was adopted and what was the original flower, are all matters of doubt! The Fleur-de-Lys, as an ornament, is very ancient; there is one on the brow of the Egyptian Sphinx, and that is *very* ancient, you know! It appears in many

carvings of the Egyptians; it was also known in India, where it was looked upon as a symbol of life. In ancient Greece and Rome it was constantly to be found in decoration; other countries have also made use of it for hundreds of years. But how it came to be adopted by the royal house of France is not really known for certain, though there are several legends to account for it.

I have read that the Franks, some of the early occupants of France, used the flowers of the iris in the ceremony of proclaiming their kings, and it seems likely that this gave rise to the conventional design now termed a Fleur-de-Lys. The Franks came from a marshy land, where the iris was common, and it is said that when a king was proclaimed they carried him among his people seated on a target or shield, and that they placed in his hand a stem of iris in bloom to represent a sceptre (a curious connection with this is the fact that our royal sceptres have a Fleur-de-Lys at the handle end).



I. ROYAL STANDARD OF FRANCE
SINCE REIGN OF CHARLES V.



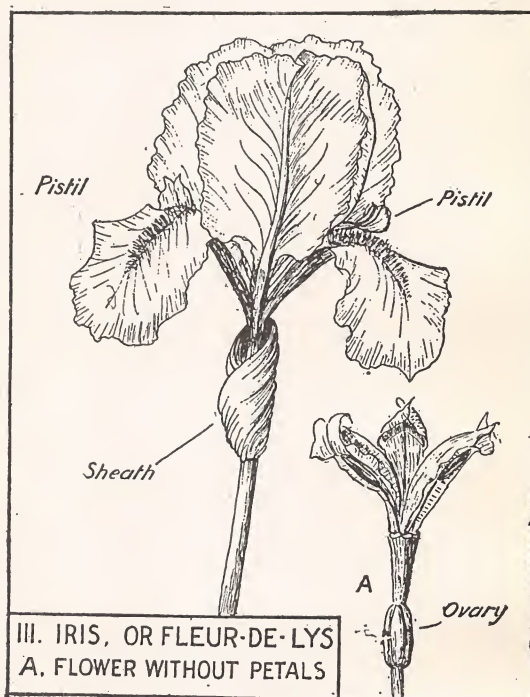
II. PRINCE OF WALES CROWN
WITH FLEUR-DE-LYS

Then there is a legend concerning Clovis I., a Frankish king. His wife, Clotilde, was a Christian, and she sought to convert her husband to her faith. When he was fighting against the Huns on one occasion, and was very hard pressed by them, he promised his wife that if he succeeded in conquering his enemy he would become a Christian. He gained the victory, and promptly journeyed to Rheims to be baptized (A.D. 496). The legend has it that on his way thither he was met by an angel, who gave him a white banner on which was a golden lily (that is, a Fleur-de-Lys), telling him it was a special mark of favour from Heaven. In gratitude for the gift, Clovis adopted this as his banner.

Another legend was that on returning from one of the Crusades the soldiers found their flag had been miraculously covered with Fleur-de-Lys; and certainly for many years a large number were represented on the

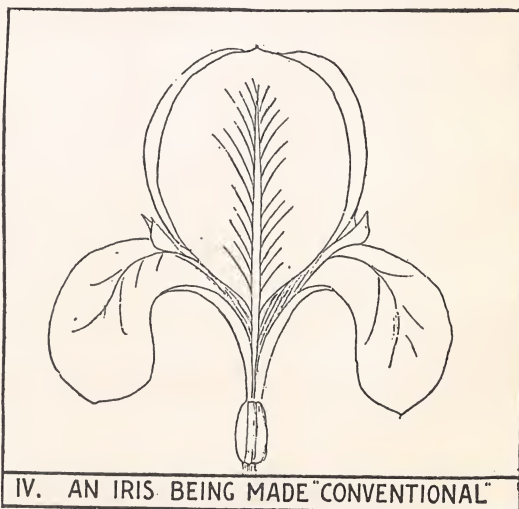
Royal Standard of those early days. But Charles V. of France, who reigned about 1381, decreed that three should be the number, representing the Trinity, as shown in fig. 1.

Of course this emblem got on to our English coins and arms by the marriage of our English kings and princes

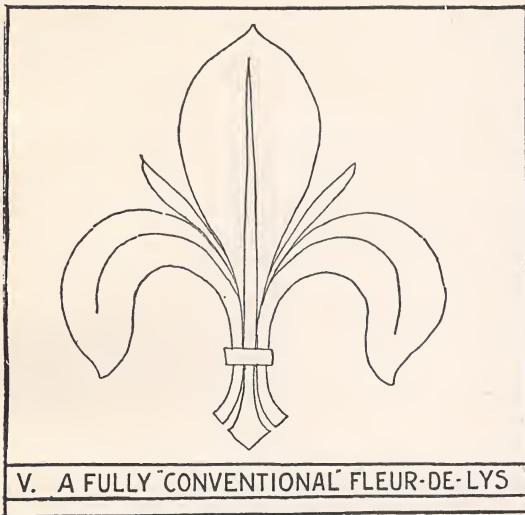


III. IRIS, OR FLEUR-DE-LYS
A. FLOWER WITHOUT PETALS

with French royal ladies. In these early times all great families had their own armorial bearings, as they were called, that is, some sign or collection of signs which when seen on liveries or the shields of their soldiers, showed to what family they belonged. Then

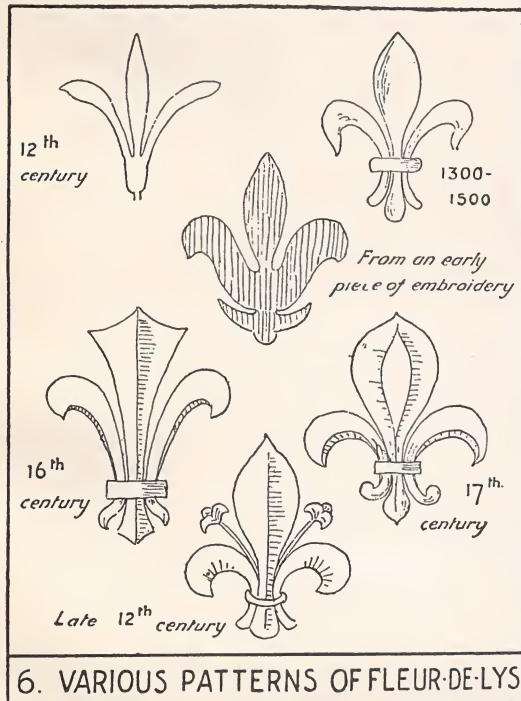


IV. AN IRIS BEING MADE "CONVENTIONAL"



when a French lady married an English gentleman her signs were added to her husband's. By reason of royal marriages the Fleur-de-Lys was included on our coins, and in our arms from the reign of Henry III. right up to the time of George III. In 1801 it was removed from the coinage, but it is still in some of the crowns of the princes. Fig. 2 shows you the crown of the Prince of Wales as it was a few years ago.

The origin of its name is veiled in mystery. Some say it means 'Flower from the river Ly,' others that it is 'Flower of Loïs,' or Louis, the name of many of the French kings.



Now as to the flower which has given rise to the Fleur-de-Lys. After much argument I think that it is fairly settled that *if* a flower did give rise to it (it *might* have originated from a spear, or a javelin head or an arrow head), then the iris is the flower. At one time French botanists included the iris among lilies, so the idea that a lily might be the flower may have come about through that.

Now I will try to show you how an iris may have been the ancestor of a Fleur-de-Lys. In fig. 3 I have drawn for you an ordinary wild iris or flag such as we find in our marshes or on the edges of our small rivers or streams. I have sketched it as I found it, perfectly naturally. You see it has three upstanding leaves (you cannot see them *all*, but *parts* of them *all*); three which curve outward and downward; and also three which droop over these last. These three which droop are



really petal-like pistils, and under each is a single stamen. At A, I show you a flower with everything cut away except the petal-like pistils and the stamens. I have here pulled away the sheath round the base, and you can see the ovary—the future seed-vessel.

In fig. 4 I have drawn it again, only I have begun to stiffen it and make it what is called 'conventional' (i.e., to make an ornament of it!). You will note I have straightened out the creases and made both halves of the flower alike. Now, do you think it impossible to make it so simple that it will eventually be a Fleur-de-Lys? I think not. Here in fig. 5 I have drawn a Fleur-de-Lys which I am sure you will agree has honestly risen from an iris!

Having got thus far, you will readily understand that different artists have drawn the flower differently, and you consequently find such examples as are shown in fig. 6. Some designers liked them thin, others preferred them fat and stumpy; others, again, liked them angular or even very ornamental. Sometimes, as you will see in the late twelfth-century example, an extra feature 'grew' between the leaves, so to speak. This could easily have been caused by the petal-like pistils, which in some varieties are more noticeable than in others.

Fig. 7 is a sketch of the Fleur-de-Lys as it appears in the Arms of Florence. Here you have it in a highly

ornamental state, but the original outline is still quite distinct.

At the time of the French Revolution all emblems of royalty were destroyed, and the tricolor was used in its place; so naturally many of the beautiful examples of the Fleur-de-Lys were lost. As an ornament, it is now one of the commonest forms: only this day, as I walked along in my town, I saw hundreds of examples of the uses to which it is put. Many of course are poor examples from an artistic point of view, but nevertheless they were Fleurs-de-Lys and a lasting memorial of a great emblem.

E. M. BARLOW.

MY PARTY.

IF I had a party at Christmas,
I'll tell you who I should invite,
I'd ask the wee mouse in the corner
Who only comes out in the night.

I'd ask the old toad in the garden,
The one that lives under a stone,
He'd not be the least bit of trouble,
Although he is ugly, I own.

There's a sweet little bat in the garden,
Who flitters all over the lawn,
He always wakes up in the evening,
When I am beginning to yawn.

I'd ask him to come in to supper,
He'd not be awake before that,
They all go about in the evening,
The mouse and the toad and the bat.

Nurse says she's afraid to go near them—
She thinks they would bite, I suppose;
Perhaps I must wait till I'm older,
And have them when nobody knows.

EVA M. HAINES.

THE BLACK SHEEP.

THE Harveys were a model family—all their neighbours said so. Matthew and Alfred, the two elder sons, were tall, well-made youths, with clearly-cut features and smooth brown hair, who, after doing very well at school, had slipped at once into good berths in offices in their native town, and were always a credit to their up-bringing. Their sisters, Ellen and Ada—pretty, neat-looking girls—took prizes in their classes for needlework and regular attendance, and, like their brothers, obtained good situations as soon as they were old enough. Little Ruth was a charming and engaging child; so much so that people generally said, when they looked at her, 'What a sweet little thing Ruth Harvey is!'

But, then, there was Harold. Harold was like none of the others, and he was rather unfortunately placed; too young for the society of his elder brothers and sisters, and too old to play with Ruth. He did not even look like the rest. Instead of their dark hair and clearly-outlined features, he had a mop of reddish curls and a round, freckled face; and, though strong enough, he managed—often through his own fault—to get into a good many illnesses and accidents. For instance, he was laid up the whole of one spring with a sharp attack of inflammation of the lungs, caught through wading in the local brook when a keen east wind was blowing. He

fell out of a tree, much too tall for small boys to climb with safety, and, sustaining an awkward fracture of the left leg bone, had to lose some weeks at school and to suffer much at the hands of a not-too-sympathetic doctor.

'Boys should keep out of trees,' said Dr. Collins, grimly, 'and then they would not have to have their broken bones set.'

Another time this luckless youth came home with a terrible black eye. 'Done in a scrap,' was all the information he would give about his unhappy plight; and there was another hindrance; for, of course, he could not go to school with a poultice or an application of raw beef on his forehead.

But these scrapes were as nothing to the thing which happened later. Nothing could exceed the rage and disgust with which Matthew and Alfred read, in the columns of the local evening paper, the report of a police-court case in which Harold Harvey, schoolboy, aged thirteen, was charged with breaking a pane of glass in a shop window, and being concerned with several other boys in making a disturbance outside the shop.

Father and brothers were roused at last to take a serious view of Harold's transgressions. Only his mother had a kind word for him now. He's a good-hearted lad, when all's said and done,' said Mrs. Harvey. 'I don't believe there's any real harm in him. Don't be too hard on him, Father; he will come to good yet.'

Matthew looked up from his paper, with a frown and a shake of the head. 'Oh, Mother!' he said. 'A disreputable little cad like Harold, who never laces his boots properly, or takes the trouble to wash behind his ears, *can't* be anything but a disgrace to us.'

Mrs. Harvey said no more; but she kept a soft place in her heart for the erring boy, and her thoughts of him were prayers, as the secret thoughts of so many mothers are.

'The boy is doing no good at school; he has got into a bad set,' said Mr. Harvey, gloomily. 'I shall take him away, and send him to Morris's, at Frensham. Morris has always said he would take a lad of mine.'

Mr. Morris kept a grocer's shop at a market-town about sixteen miles away, and thither Harold was dispatched, for a month on trial.

For three weeks there was peace in the Harveys' dwelling; then, one Sunday as the family sat at dinner, the door suddenly opened, and a dusty, travel-stained young figure entered the pleasant sitting-room. 'I have come back,' announced Harold; 'walked all the way. Mr. Morris jawed me all the time, and I couldn't stand it.'

An indignant letter from the offended grocer followed. Mr. Morris would do a good deal, he said, to oblige an old friend; but nothing would induce him to take this particularly trying boy back again.

It was the same with two or three other places that were obtained for 'the black sheep,' as his brothers called him. Either Harold 'couldn't stand it,' or his employers could not put up with him; and Mr. Harvey was almost in despair.

'There's just one chance,' he said to his wife; 'we could send him to sea.'

'Oh, Father!—and not know what would become of him!' cried the poor mother.

'We don't know what will become of him now,' returned her husband. 'I tell you, I'm never easy about him.'

Mr. Harvey, being a resolute man, carried out his purpose. Harcid had never been bitten with the sea-fever, as so many boys of his kind are. He looked on in sullen silence while Mother and sisters sewed for him and his father made all necessary arrangements.

'He will be gone for two years,' Mr. Harvey announced, 'and the plan has this advantage—that he will not be able to run away now.'

The boy broke down when it came to saying good-bye; but it was too late for repentance; and, in a time so short that it passed like a flash, Harold Harvey had sailed away from his native land and was thrown amongst total strangers.

Two years are a long while to look forward to; but, after all, they soon pass; and then the wanderer returned. But what a transformation had taken place! Was this alert, smart young seaman really the scape-grace Harold? His red hair had been cropped short; he had shot up, in the surprising way in which boys of his age do. As tall as his brothers, full of stories of the life which, after much hardship, he had grown to like, Harold was a different being. He had saved a life at sea, too—jumping overboard and holding up a sinking comrade till a boat could come to the rescue. No one was more glad than his father to see the change in Harold. 'I tried to do my best, and, thank God, it answered,' he said. Perhaps that is the conclusion of the whole matter: that, if people really do want to find a right way out of their difficulties, they always will, sooner or later. Also that, in this wonderful world, 'While there is life there is hope,' and even a black sheep may, in process of time, become a white one.

C. J. BLAKE.

JUST IN TIME.

DURING the holidays, there were few things that Berry Henderson enjoyed more than the visit he always paid his mother's former cook, Jeannie, now married to a railwayman, named Black.

Jeannie lived with her husband in a very lonely, unfrequented spot. Mr. Black had served the railway company for many years, and now looked after the gates at a level crossing on the main line.

Ever since the first holidays, when Berry had found his mother's kitchen occupied by a stranger, he had gone to see Jeannie and her husband, and spent a night in their cosy little cottage. Black always let him open the gates to the few vehicles that came along, and it was exciting to cheer a great express as it dashed past. There were chickens too, some tame pheasants, a nice curly brown retriever, and a parrot with queer manners and surprising language. Jeannie's cooking, too, was as good as ever, and his favourite cakes and sweets were always ready for him.

During the summer holidays of 1914, Berry's visit got postponed till late in September: there were so many things that a boy of fourteen could do—if he be a Boy Scout—to help his country when the great war started. The week before he returned to school, though, Berry found that he had a few hours to spare, and arranged to visit his old friends.

Berry's father was vicar of the nearest village, by road, to the level crossing, and once a week Mrs. Black drove there to do her shopping. It was a six-mile drive, and Mrs. Black had a very old pony which walked most of the way, so she generally was absent all day, leaving

her husband to look after himself. On this particular occasion it was arranged that Berry was to return with Jeannie in the pony-trap and walk home next day, unless he managed to beg a lift from some friendly carter or motorist.

Three o'clock was the hour fixed for them to start from the vicarage, but Jeannie—on foot, and very heated—arrived a few minutes before that time.

'I'm in a fix, Master Berry, and that's the truth. Just as I was in the butcher's, the wheel of the trap came off. Mr. Smith, the butcher, was directing two strange men who had lost their way when I went in; then they goes and Mr. Smith serves me, and a minute later when I comes out and put my parcel in the cart, off comes the wheel!'

Full of sympathy and interest, Berry went back with Mrs. Black to the damaged cart, half-overturned in the village street. Then he hurried off to Foster, the wheelwright, only to find that he had been called away by a mysterious telegram.

'I don't see how I'm going to get home to-night,' cried Mrs. Black, despairingly. 'My poor husband will be worried!'

'If you can't go, Jeannie, there's no reason why I shouldn't. I can ride father's bicycle if I lower the saddle, and I shall be there sooner than if we went in the trap. It's not much past four.'

'That's the very thing, Master Berry, if you don't mind,' said Mrs. Black, with relief.

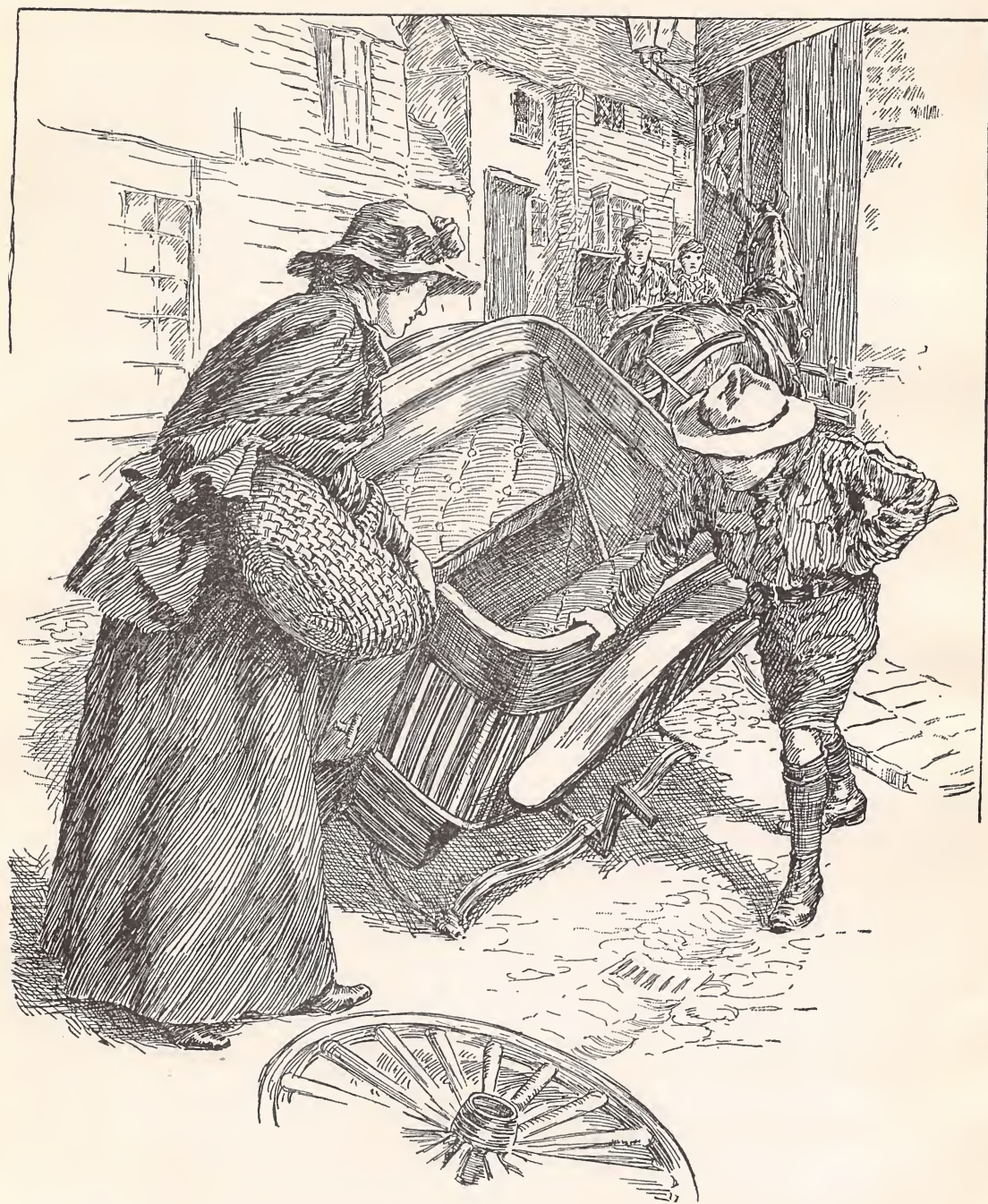
In ten minutes Berry started on the bicycle with a last wave to his mother and Jeannie. He flew along the first three miles, which was slightly downhill, and thoroughly enjoyed the fine afternoon and the glory of the autumn woods he passed through. As usual, the road was desolate, and when the back wheel of the bicycle went flat, Berry knew that he must do the best he could, unaided, to repair the puncture. Luckily he had a repairing outfit and had often helped his father mend a tyre, but he was slow, and it was nearly an hour later before he got on the way again.

The sun had set over half an hour when Berry at last reached the solitary cottage. The sky was still red in the west, and the empty moorland seemed almost to blend into the darkening sky eastward. There was no sign of any human being about. This was strange, because the gates were open to the road, and between them stood a waggon of hay with two great horses between the shafts.

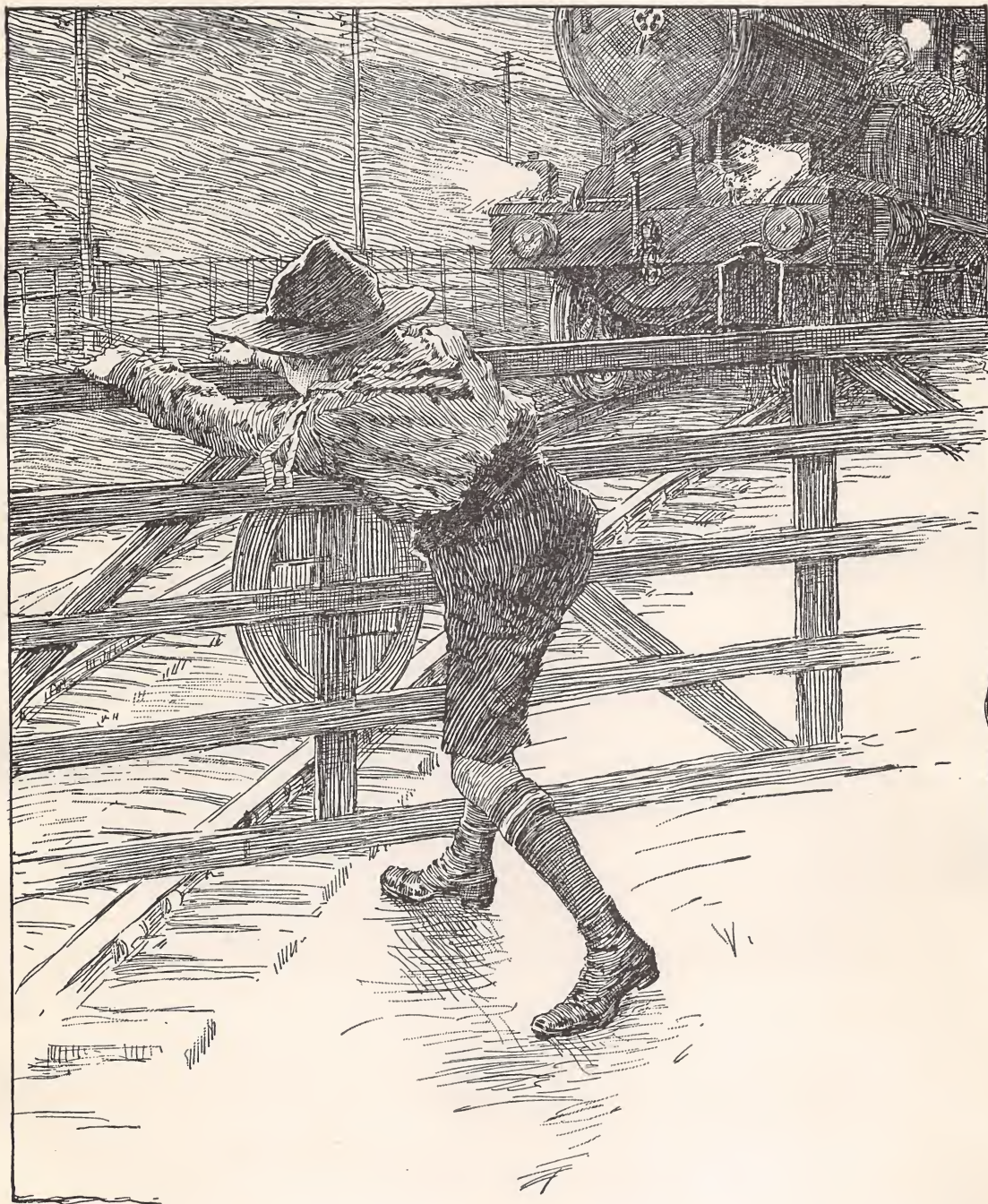
Full of wonder, Berry placed his bicycle against the wall and opened the cottage door. The room smelt of spirits, or something equally nasty, and seemed at first, in the deep twilight, to be empty. Then Berry could make out the outline of his old friend sitting huddled up in an armchair by the dying fire. He appeared to be asleep, and Berry did his best to rouse him, without avail.

Feeling thoroughly puzzled, Berry gave up shaking Black by the arm, and began to wonder what had become of the driver of the waggon. A voice from the parlour suddenly broke the silence, but Berry, hurrying there, found it proceeded from the parrot. He searched the cottage and outhouses, but no human being was to be found. The brown retriever greeted him effusively, but could give no information. More and more puzzled, Berry went out to the waggon, and, to his great astonishment, found that the horses were tethered securely to the gate-posts by enormously thick ropes.

(Concluded on page 154.)



"Berry went back with Mrs. Black to the damaged cart."



“He had caught hold of the other when the train was upon him.”

JUST IN TIME.

(Concluded from page 151.)

BERRY was not a stupid boy, and he at once concluded that something was very wrong. He looked at his watch—the hands pointed to ten minutes past seven; then he ran into the cottage and consulted the list of trains which hung on the wall, and was thankful to find that no train was due to pass for over half an hour. Once more he turned his attention to Black, who was breathing heavily, and was making another effort to rouse him when—to his great horror—the electric bell rang just above his head. Berry knew what that bell always meant! A train had passed the nearest signal-box, five miles away. If the train was an express it would be on to the closed gates and loaded waggon in six or seven minutes, perhaps less. Quick as lightning, he considered how he might avert the danger. Could he run towards the approaching train and signal? But how? It was nearly dark now, he had no lantern lit to wave, and nothing else would be of any use. No, he must get the cart and horses out of the way and open the gates, if it was possible. He ran out, and with his knife began to saw at the thick ropes with all his strength. They were very tough, but one by one he had them severed. Then he caught the horses' bridles. They were heavy, slow animals, and he pulled and tugged at their heads vehemently.

The thunder of the approaching train was to be plainly heard in the still autumn air by the time the waggon had drawn clear of the lines, and Berry saw with agony the bright lights rushing upon him as he dragged one gate open. He had caught hold of the other when the train was upon him; some one shouted; the gate splintered like matchwood, and Berry was flung backwards head-over-heels into the soft heather.

For some moments he lay stunned, only aware of a terrible pain in his shoulder where the wheel of the engine must have struck him. Then he heard a voice say, 'It was a boy, sir; I saw him plain. He was trying to get the gate open in time. As plucky a bit of work as ever I see.'

Berry staggered to his feet, and found himself surrounded by a crowd of khaki-clad figures.

'Is the train all right?' he gasped.

'Quite all right,' replied a young officer, kindly.

The crowd parted suddenly, and with a gasp of amazement Berry found himself looking up into the stern face of one of England's greatest generals.

'We've been investigating,' said the great General; 'and we think we owe our lives to you. Tell us how it all happened.'

Though Berry felt very sick and dizzy, he managed to give a fairly clear account of how he found the waggon tied between the gates, and of how he had failed to rouse Black.

'Some one go to the cottage and try and get the man awake,' ordered the General; then he turned to Berry again. 'You've saved the lives of two thousand men to-night, my boy,' he said.

'And yours, sir, which is of more importance than all of ours,' said a colonel.

The General smiled, then he looked round. 'It's time we got on,' he said; 'a quarter of an hour has been lost. First, though, this young man deserves a cheer—don't you think so, men?'

The soldiers needed no second bidding. Cheer after

cheer startled all the wild creatures that had their home in the heather. Berry choked, and bit his lip, but all to no purpose. In another moment he was sobbing on the famous General's shoulder. 'Oh!' he gasped, when he had recovered a bit, 'I hope the other scouts will never know!'

'I hope they will,' said the General. 'Crying, after the brave thing you did just now, is nothing to be ashamed of.' He shook Berry warmly by the hand as he spoke, then turned and gave some orders to the officer and half-a-dozen men who were to remain with Berry and look into the mystery of the tethered waggon. Then he once more took his seat in the delayed train full of soldiers bound for France.

The train gone, Berry went to the cottage to see if his old friend had regained consciousness. His shoulder was swelling very much, too, and he was anxious to get his coat off and ease it. Black had been brought round, and though feeling very sick from the chloroform that he had evidently been given, was eagerly describing what had happened as far as he was concerned.

'Two men called me to go out and open the gates,' he said. 'I did so, then came back and sat down to read my paper again, meaning to shut the gates in a few minutes when they had got on. I was just thinking that the waggon was standing still and didn't seem to be in a hurry to move off, when the two drivers—funny-looking chaps they were—comes in here. Before I could ask them what they wanted, a cloth, smelling sickly sweet, was pressed over my face. I struggled, I can tell you. It wasn't a morsel of good, and next thing I know I find all of you staring at me.'

Matters were explained to Black, and his admiration and gratitude knew no bounds when he learnt how Berry had acted in the face of such difficulty and danger. The officer examined Berry's shoulder and concluded that no bone was broken: it was only very severely bruised by the heavy blow, and would probably be all right after some days' rest and care.

Two hours later a military motor-car, ordered by the General, arrived from the nearest town; and Berry's parents were surprised when he arrived, with a military escort, long after eleven that night. They could hardly believe that their boy had performed so brave a deed till a few days later a medal arrived with a letter signed by a royal hand, thanking Berry for what he had done.

Nobody ever knew the whole story of that exciting evening. Vague rumours reached their ears. There were the two men who probably tampered with Mrs. Black's pony-trap. There were two, perhaps the same, who made Black senseless, and bribed a carter to let them drive his waggon for an hour, telling him a vague story about a bet they had made. There were others, too, who stopped the one or two vehicles going towards the level crossing from either direction at the critical hour, and delayed them on some silly pretext. But it was all very difficult to piece together, and Berry's father was told that the authorities did not wish the matter discussed more than could be helped.

Berry's part in the affair could not be hushed up, though he told every one that it was absurd to praise him for doing what any one else would have done.

If you ever should motor through the little village in an eastern county which is Berry's home, call at the vicarage, and Berry's proud mother will show you his medal, the royal letter, the great general's signed photograph, and the handsome silver cup given by the grateful farmer whose horses Berry saved from a horrible death.

ANIMALS WITH WAR MEDALS.

OUR soldiers and sailors are proverbially fond of animal pets, and in the past these have often accompanied their owners through the manifold dangers and hardships of many a strenuous campaign.

As a natural result, quite a number of these four-footed heroes have won war medals and decorations, and one at least, 'Regimental Jack,' the famous dog of the Scots Guards, earned a miniature edition of that much-coveted bit of bronze which bears the inscription, 'For valour.'

This latter was in recognition of Jack's distinguished services during the Crimean War, when he gallantly saved a soldier's life at the battle of the Alma, and also took part in the charge at Inkerman, bowling over several of the grey-coated enemy, as he raced madly along with his two-legged comrades.

'Tiny,' a fox-terrier, who belonged to the Army Service Corps, was another decorated veteran.

He was present at Tel-el-Kebir and other engagements of the Egyptian War of 1882, and on returning to England his proud possessors bought for him the Egyptian War Medal and the Khedive's Star.

Then 'Jenny,' a service monkey belonging to H.M.S. *Vigilant*, and a wonderful favourite with the whole ship's company, accompanied the naval brigade who formed part of the force with which Lord Napier marched on Magdala in the days of the Abyssinian War.

'Jenny' had her reward in the shape of a war medal, in addition to a silver chain, and a first-class conduct certificate.

The late Queen Victoria decorated at least one regimental pet with her own hands, and this honour fell to 'Bob,' the gallant dog of the old 66th Foot (now the 2nd battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment). 'Bob' saw plenty of active service in Afghanistan during the seventies of the last century, and on the fatal day of Maiwand, when General Burrows' little force met with such a terrible disaster, he was in the very thick of the fray. It was useless to try and hold him back, he would be in the firing line, till at last an Afghan bullet stretched him wounded on the ground. Fortunately he recovered to receive the honour due to his gallant conduct, and when the Royal Berkshires returned to England, 'Bob' appeared by command before the Queen at Osborne, and Her Majesty tied the Afghan War Medal round his neck.

Another army animal which possessed well-won war honours was the famous Arab charger which carried the late Earl Roberts during his campaigns in Afghanistan. By special permission of Queen Victoria, Lord Roberts' favourite mount was invested with the Cabul medal with four clasps, and the Cabul-Candahar star.

W. HELLIER.

FORTUNATE FRITZ.

(Concluded from page 139.)

VERY often the things which we expect—whether good or evil things—never come to pass. It was so in Fritz's case. He was never restored to the tailor. It was a time of war between England and France, and Fritz had been only about a week at sea when one morning he was called out of his berth to help clear

the decks for action. The ship was being chased by an English one.

There was a sharp fight. For two hours Fritz heard the balls whizzing around his head, as he ran about the deck executing the orders of the gunner under whom he was placed. The English were the conquerors. The *Chantecler* had to strike her colours to the *Invincible*, and Fritz was taken, amongst the other prisoners, on board the British ship.

He was such a small and unimportant prisoner that when the ship reached her destined port—which was Hull—he was allowed to wander away. For an hour or two he was pleased and amused as he walked about this (to him) foreign town; but when, growing hungry and tired, he realised his friendless position, he sat down on a door-step and sobbed and cried.

Well might he cry! The poor child had not a farthing wherewith to buy food or lodging, and he could not speak a word of English. Compassionate passers-by asked what was the matter, but he could not make himself understood. As night approached he rose from the step, and went looking about for some kind of shelter.

But now came 'the turn of the tide.' Little though he knew it, his troubles were at an end. As he wandered sadly through one of the streets, a party of officers came riding along. One dropped his whip. Fritz picked it up and handed it to him. This little act of politeness completely changed matters for Fritz. The officer, Colonel W—, thanked him, and noticing his forlorn appearance, spoke kindly to him. Fritz did not understand the English officer's speech, but he *did* understand the kindness of his tone, and replied with a few words in French.

'Bring him to the barracks,' said the Colonel to his servant. 'Lafitte shall find out his history for us.'

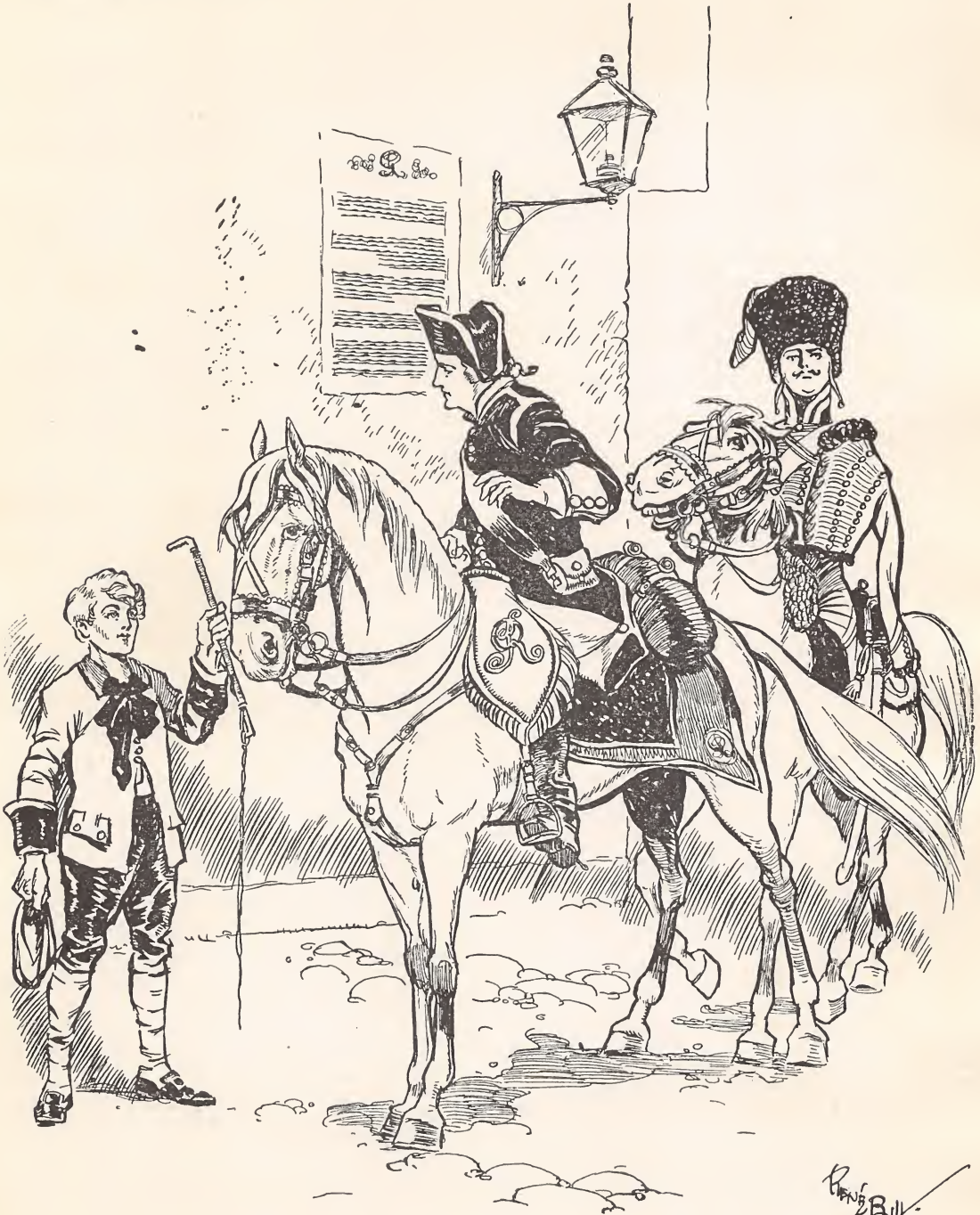
Lafitte was the bandmaster, and a French royalist refugee. To him Fritz related his adventures, and he offered to instruct his young compatriot in music, and, with Colonel W—'s permission, to make him one of his bandmen. The Colonel readily agreed to this, so Fritz shortly appeared on parade in uniform. His first instrument was the triangle; but though he could not learn tailoring, he could learn music fast enough, and he was speedily promoted to something better. So satisfactory, indeed, was his progress that a few years later, when his friend Lafitte died, Fritz Körner was made master of the band.

The hopes of Fritz soared no higher, he was perfectly contented with his lot; but he was destined still to rise.

The regiment to which he belonged was, in course of time, sent to Gibraltar. Here another fortunate accident won for him the favour of two ladies—the wife and daughter of a wealthy Spanish merchant—whom he defended from the attack of a ferocious dog.

Then, by-and-by, after the English forces had taken Minorca, one of the regiments that had formerly garrisoned that island volunteered for the British service, and was sent to Gibraltar. Scarcely a man of this regiment could speak English. Here was another chance for Fritz to distinguish himself, for like many Swiss he could speak both French and German. He proved so useful an interpreter that he was made a commissioned officer of the transferred regiment.

Now he was the equal in rank of the young Spanish lady whom, with her mother, he had rescued from the

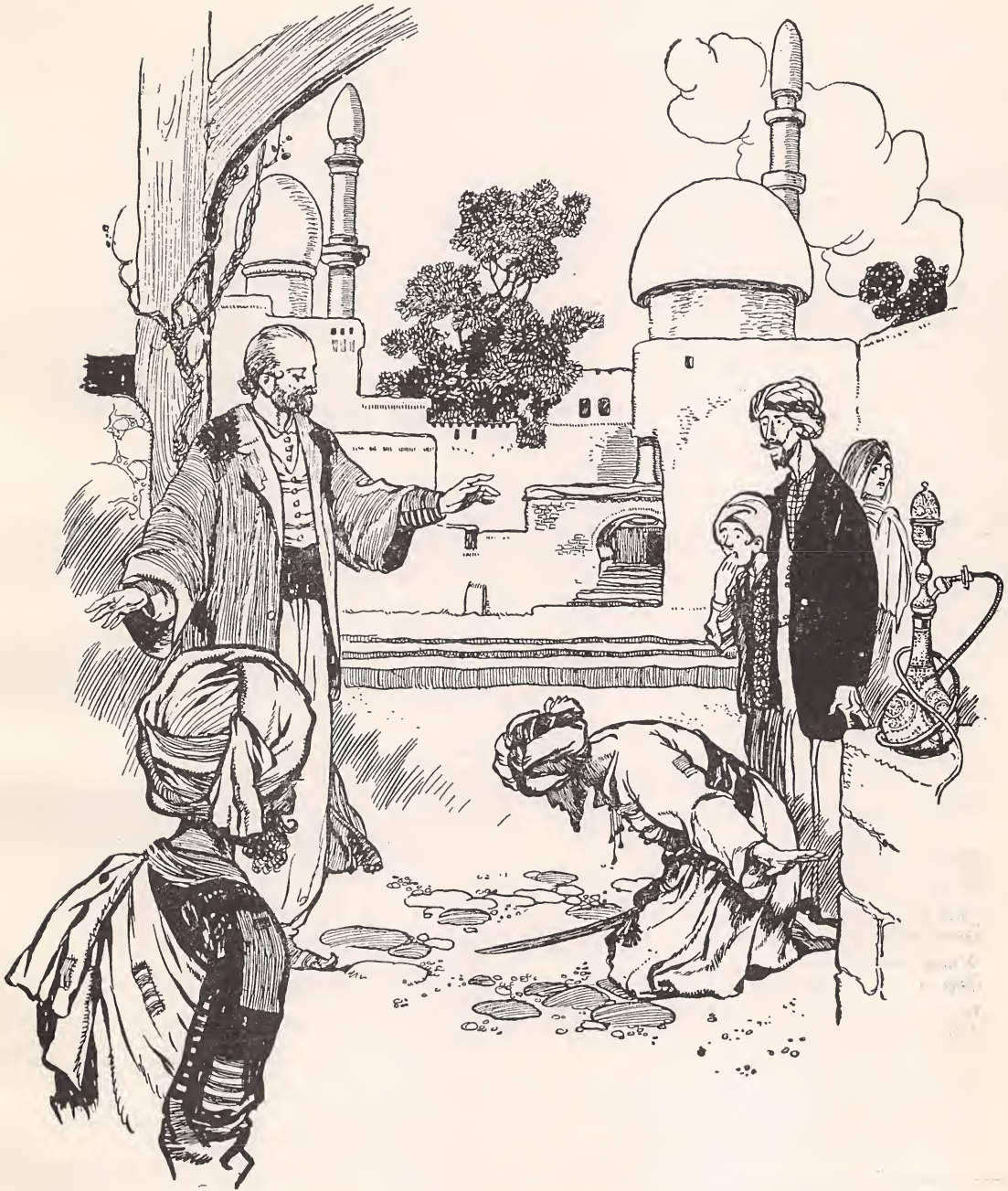


"This little act of politeness completely changed matters."

fierce dog. Fritz often met her, but though she returned his affection, he could not yet marry her. He had nothing but his pay, and the rich merchant sternly refused to give his daughter to such a poor man. For

a time the lovers were separated, Fritz's regiment being summoned to England. Shortly afterwards, however, he received a staff appointment, and thus at last was rich enough to wed his dear lady.

E. D.



“Take my sword and kill the wretch who would have killed you.”

GOHUR AND BABER.

A Hindu Legend.

A TALL, dark man, dressed in white, was walking along the bank of the river Ganges. He seemed lost in thought. People passing him laughed, and wondered what he was thinking about. ‘Gohur,’ said

one, jestingly, ‘is waiting for the fish to cook themselves that he may eat.’

But Gohur’s thoughts were very terrible ones. He was thinking how he might kill the Emperor. Baber (that was the Emperor’s name) was not a Hindu, and though he was just and merciful, many hated him because he was a foreigner. Gohur thought it would

be a fine thing to free his country from a foreign yoke by killing Baber.

The Emperor often wandered about the city in disguise, so finding out for himself whether his laws were obeyed, and how his poorer subjects were treated. Gohur knew this, and hiding a sword beneath his robe, he went into the city. There he found a great commotion. A large elephant which had broken loose was charging down the middle of the street. People, screaming with terror, were running out of his way. One small child, of the lowest class, slipped and fell in the mad beast's path. The elephant was almost upon him when a man in the dress of a labourer sprang forward, and at the risk of his own life, snatched up the boy just in time.

The elephant rushed on towards the river. As the child's rescuer leaped back his turban fell off, and revealed the features of the Emperor!

A hush fell upon the crowd as another man, holding a sword in his hand, came forward and knelt before Baber.

'Prince!' said Gohur, 'to-day I meant to slay you, but now I cannot. Far greater is it to save a life than to destroy one. Therefore take my sword, and kill the wretch who would have killed you.'

The Emperor smiled as he stretched out his hand to raise Gohur. 'Your reasoning is faulty, my friend,' he said. 'If, as you say, it is better to save than to slay, why should I slay *you*? Take back your sword, and use it, if you will, in my service. I make you one of my palace guards—if you will accept the post.'

Gohur bowed his head and wept. Thenceforth, Baber had no more faithful servant than he. E. D.

THE HUMBLE BEE.

SOMEBODY busy is coming this way—
'Buzz-abuzz hum!' we can hear her say.

What is she doing th t busies her so?
Come, and we'll see where she wants to go.

Here she comes to the Foxglove tall
In and out of its blossoms all.

Only one seems to please her well;
Hear her buzzing inside its bell!

Where there's honey she understands—
Gets it all without tools or hands;

Works away for the whole day long,
Always singing her buzzing song.

See her legs—they are almost black,
Brown and yellow her furry back.

Filling her honey-bag, far she'll roam—
Now it's full, and she's off for home!

EVA M. HAINES.

A MOTHER-BIRD'S DEVOTION.

SOME time ago, in a part of the world where such events are not uncommon, a forest-fire occurred. In a secluded part of that forest a mother-bird had laid her eggs and hatched her little brood, and was attending day by day to their wants. When the fire broke out she was placed in a terrible position. She could save her own life by flight, but she was unable to move her little ones or take them to a place of safety.

Who can tell all the agonies of terror and fright that must have beset her, as she saw the fire drawing nearer and nearer to the spot where her little ones were, unable to help themselves or to be helped by her! But she chose the part that was dictated by love.

A scientist, passing through the forest some little time after, came across the charred remains of the nest, and the little fledglings and the devoted mother-bird. He said that when he contemplated the scene, and thought how the mother could have flown to a place of safety, and yet elected to stay there and share the doom of her little ones, the tears came unbidden to his eyes.

And I think we shall agree with him that in the long record of even human devotion and self-sacrifice, no more touching illustration has ever been given of a mother's love and tenderness. FRANK ELLIS.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 147.)

THE oasis looked different in the light of morning—different but no less beautiful: brilliant sunshine, dissolving all mystery, gilded the palms and shone on the vivid greens around the spring. The date-palms, bearing long pendant clusters of fruit—great bunches weighing from twenty to twenty-five pounds, Uncle Charlie said—would offer a tempting bait to the boys when they should be ripe. Till then they must be content with the delightful shade the trees cast over the tent which had been erected beneath them. Everything was so green, shady, and luxuriant, and such a contrast to the glare of the arid desert around. The wonder—the heart and life-blood of it all—was that small well and the tiny rill of water that glistened among the leaves and grass and vanished again in the sand. It came up from below, touched one little spot of earth and blessed it, and disappeared again.

The camp-kitchen was to be erected some few yards from the tent; their larder and storehouse was formed by two rocks which stood in the shade and leaned against each other, making a miniature cave, which would keep the provisions cool, and had the advantage that it could be closed at night by placing the upturned sledge before the opening and securing it with a large stone to keep the stores from the depredations of small animals.

As they sat in the shade, looking out on the dazzling sands of the desert and at the range of hills a mile distant, the Professor told them that this desert, which seemed so boundless to their eyes, was but the fringe; the range of hills before them formed a wall, the rocky barrier of the desert proper—the commencement of a high plateau some two thousand feet above sea-level, the desolate pathless table-land which forms the Libyan Desert—itself only the eastern portion of that vast Sahara which stretches across the continent of Africa from west to east, two thousand miles.

The boys sat looking at the hills and digesting this information, when the Sheikh joined them, and noting the direction of their gaze, said, with a smile, 'What see you there?'

The boys could see nothing beyond the wild rocky slopes of the hills.

'There,' said the Arab, steadying his finger to one definite point. 'Eyes of Englis boy not much good for the sun,' he remarked.

They strained their eyes again in the direction indicated. The sun, now high in the south-east, blazed full into the face of these western hills, and threw no shadows of rocky projections to give definition to its forms: they distinguished nothing for some time; then they made out in advance of the hills, and in their sides, faint tracery of columns, scattered ruins, and a tower in the form of a pyramid with the top cut off.

'Is it a town over there?' asked Harry.

'A temple,' the Professor replied.

'Our temple?'

'Who can tell!'

The Professor then told them that at sunrise next morning they would start on an exploring expedition to the temple, and spend a long day there; meanwhile, they would do what they could to make their present quarters snug. He had to overhaul the equipment, and Selim must arrange his kitchen; then he was going with the Sheikh to examine the ground to the south of the oasis, and they would be free to amuse themselves and take stock of their surroundings.

It was not many hours before the boys, accompanied by Selim, started on a voyage of discovery. They had learned from the Sheikh that at one time this tiny oasis was more extensive—that subterranean streamlets from the hills had watered and made luxuriant a considerable tract of the desert hereabouts. The stream—the fountain from which they drank and the little rill which flowed through the oasis—then gushed forth with an abundance of water. They could see that the streamlet, after passing through the oasis, lost itself in the sand; but in those times of which the Sheikh spoke the rill was a considerable brook, fed from a lake that lay to the north-west where the subterranean streams collected, and instead of disappearing in the sand, ran the three miles which they had traversed on coming to the oasis, and joined the creek.

The boys decided to 'sail round the island,' as they expressed it, keeping to its sandy shore, but the sun streamed so fiercely down that they were glad, from time to time, at the excuse of the sound of a bird or the stirring of the undergrowth, to plunge into the cool shadows of the foliage.

'Fine place for golliwogs,' said Selim, who had picked up the word from a party of tourists, and now used it for snakes, lizards, and such small fry, and before they had gone very far they found that he was quite right. The glint of a lizard, and then another, in the short scrub caught their eyes, but the little creatures were too quick for them.

Presently they sat down, resting their heads in the shadow of some bushes, their legs outstretched in the sun. Harry was lazily amusing himself with a burning-glass which he drew out of his pocket; he was saying that the soldiers used them to light their pipes when camped in the desert, and that it would 'come in jolly useful' if they ran short of matches, when Selim made a slight movement and pointed to a spot a few yards away. Dick and Harry looked sharply in the direction, and saw, half buried in the sand, a long snake-like creature; it had a curiously shaped flattened head and two small horns projecting from its forehead.

The boys looked at it with a fascinated gaze as it lay there quite motionless in the sun.

'Him poison snake,' whispered Selim. 'Him bite, you dead. I catch him.' He quietly raised himself to his knees, and without taking his eyes from the creature felt behind him for his stick; but other eyes had been watching the snake, and something was before Selim. With a rush there flew from the cover a small furry creature about three feet in length, with bushy tail extended to the full, and, fastening on the neck of the serpent, tore it with rapid bites. The snake struggled and writhed in the sand, endeavouring to turn on its assailant.

Selim sprang to his feet in excitement, shouting, 'Pharaoh rat! Pharaoh rat!' and charged down upon it with his stick. The creature gave a parting bite deep into the neck of the reptile and fled into the thicket, chattering and screaming with rage, leaving the serpent dead in the sand.

Harry turned it about with his foot and examined it. 'It's a viper,' he said, 'a horned viper, that's what it is. I have seen pictures of them. Look at its horns!'

Selim, handling it gingerly, tied it to Harry's stick, saying, 'He got a fearsome-looking head, hasn't he?'

They continued their journey, excited at the adventure and elated at the idea of carrying the spoil to camp; but it was noticeable that after this they were very careful to give a sharp look round before flinging themselves on the ground to rest. The boys worked their way round the oasis until they came to the dried-up lake mentioned by the Sheikh. This they found very similar in appearance to the swamp at the end of the creek—a pool or two of stagnant water surrounded by beds of giant reeds and water-plants and a few willowy trees.

Dick viewed it with suspicion. 'It looks rather crocodiley,' he remarked. 'I'm not going poking about in those reeds, I can tell you; I have seen one old gentleman at close quarters, and that's enough—"his bright smile haun s me still."'

Selim halloed, and flocks of water-fowl rose at the sound.

'I tell you what we will do,' said Dick. 'We will borrow Uncle Charlie's gun and have some sport.' And at the thought he became quite reconciled to the Dismal Swamp, as he had named it. The idea of Uncle Charlie's gun had now taken possession of Dick's mind, and he was full of sporting anticipations; and when on their return journey they cut across the oasis and came upon the rivulet and spring, and Selim pointed out the marks of animals that had come there to drink, he was all enthusiasm.

'Look dere! and dere!' said Selim, 'dat de spoor: him come to drink, see him little hoofs,' and he pointed to footmarks in the soft earth. 'We come in the evening and watch, eh, Mister Dick?' And Dick felt that he was born to be a hunter of big game.

Uncle Charlie pronounced the snake to be a Horned Viper—very common in Egypt. Its fierce assailant, which Harry described as looking like an enormous weasel, was doubtless an Ichneumon, an animal which feeds on birds, snakes, and small quadrupeds. 'It serves a very useful purpose,' said the Professor, 'in keeping down the teeming reptile life of Egypt; especially is it of service in destroying innumerable crocodiles by feeding on their eggs, of which it is very fond. The ancient Egyptians,' he told them, 'used to tame this fierce little animal and allow it the free run of their houses to clear them of reptiles and other pests.'

(Continued on page 162.)



“There flew from the cover a small furry creature.”



“‘What does he say?’ asked Dick.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 159.)

CHAPTER X.

THE next morning, before the sun was well up, they started across the desert to explore the ruins of the temple. The air of early morning was delightfully cool, and as they had no ships of the desert to pilot on this occasion, they were soon on the spot. The great pyramidal tower which they had seen from the distance, and which the Professor called a Pylon, was one of two which had formed the front of an inner court, the entrance to which opened between them. This tower stood securely, but its fellow had almost disappeared, its place being marked by the broken wall of its base and a great heap of debris. Beyond and around the pylon were the remains of extensive buildings that at one time must have been of great importance, as was shown by the ruins of a magnificent avenue of columns.

Passing through the gateway they entered what had been the inner court of the temple, roofless and strewn with fragments of masonry. This great enclosure still bore evidence of its former grandeur in the ranks of carved pillars on each side, and the corridor between them and the outer wall. A few of the columns still retained their beautiful capitals, and the walls had some remains of sculptured designs; but the further end was bare—a blank wall in which was a small doorway communicating, by means of a passage, with a square chamber quite bare of ornament, without exit or any opening to admit light. So intense was the darkness of this dungeon-like apartment that Harry appropriated it forthwith for the purposes of a 'dark-room' for changing and developing his photographic plates.

This end of the court of the temple terminated in two pylons similar to those at the entrance but smaller, and in these also one had suffered severely from the ravages of time, but not to the extent of that in the front; and the other was almost untouched. Neither on the inside nor the outside was there any entrance to these pylons; the small dark chamber before-mentioned was the only opening.

On the outside at this—the north—end, the ruins of a colonnade led almost to the foot of the steep rock wall that formed the barrier of the desert; and here, excavated in the living rock, was another temple. Enormous seated figures carved in the face of the cliff guarded the entrance of this temple or tomb—two on each side of the portal. One had been shattered by the centuries, and all that part above the knees lay in enormous blocks of stone below; the other three were in a state of good preservation.

On one side the grit of the desert had swept like an Alpine snowdrift almost to the knees of the statues, and sloped to the threshold of the entrance, but the other side was free of sand. The doorway, although it must have been some eighteen feet in height, appeared but as a small opening compared with the proportions of the giant statues. The interior was gloomy and forbidding; the sand had swept in and lay in heaps on fallen pillars, and blocks of stone, pit-holes, and beams of wood laid snares for the feet; all was

ruin as if the place had been ransacked by barbarians in search of hidden treasure. The only object that remained standing was a colossal figure similar to those at the entrance, which towered in the gloom at the far end, as if it were the evil genius of the place gloating over the desolation at its feet. Here a peculiar effect was produced by the ascending draught, which in some strange way caused a murmuring sound, like that familiar to all from a shell placed to the ear, which seemed to proceed from the statue's parted lips. The travellers gazed upward into the gloom, and listened to the curious sound; whether it was designed or accidental they could not determine, but the effect was haunting and distinctly uncanny.

'It is like the statue of Memnon,' whispered Harry.

'Only the Memnon doesn't work now,' Dick replied. 'I wonder if the old priests invented this sort of thing to strike awe into the people. It does sound rather creepy, doesn't it?'

'The idol speaks,' said the Sheikh with a little laugh. 'It is the oracle; I go hear what he says.' And to their surprise he ascended the pile of sand and rubbish, and from stone to stone of those that lay jumbled against the figure he stepped lightly and stood on the knee of the Colossus, and looking down on them from his elevation called, 'It climbs easy. Will you come?'

The boys, eager for anything in the shape of adventure, followed, Selim bringing up the rear like a monkey. The climbing was not more difficult than ascending from rock to rock at the seaside of their own country; the fragments lay piled almost to the shoulder of the statue. The Sheikh led the way and now stood with his head on a level with the great placid face and stony eyes. The figure was not cut from one block, but was built up from many, the head only being sculptured from one huge piece of granite. The stones were chipped and perished, and a large crack extended crossways from the shoulder to the hip. After peering into the crevices and listening and tapping here and there as if to discover the secret of the curious sounds, the Sheikh now looked down on Dick, saying, 'So the idol speaks.'

'What does he say?' asked Dick, with a half-smile on his upturned face.

The Arab drew himself erect and said with solemnity, 'I go a long journey into the far south, to the land of the black Soudani. I ask him, is it good, does it go well with me, or comes it to some evil end?'

Dick could not tell from his manner whether he spoke in jest or in earnest. Then placing his ear to the stony lips the Sheikh whispered, 'Speak, speak to the son of the desert, is it good with him in the far south or is it evil?'

After a moment's silence in which the murmuring sounds from the statue were very audible, Dick asked with a short laugh, 'What does he say?'

Harry had climbed down again, and the Professor had moved away and was trying to decipher some characters on the wall; but Selim remained listening open-mouthed.

The Sheikh looked keenly into Dick's eyes with a look which he had once met before, and spoke with earnestness. 'The voice of the dead idol is doubtful. Allah has placed the voice of wisdom in the living man if the heart be strong and true, not in dead stone. Now is it the true voice that speaks. English boy Dick keep the good courage, but the eyes open also. All is not well in the south, there is danger. The Amulet is at your breast,' he pointed to the Dervish's gift, which hung

from Dick's watch-chain. 'It is a nothing to you, but it speaks to the black Soudani.'

They had now descended to the plinth of the colossus. The Sheikh, a little higher than Dick, leaned against the throne of the seated figure, and tapping his foot against it. 'I will show you a thing,' he said. 'This is the throne of Pharaoh; the throne of the king is not all times strong, many times it is hollow.' He kept looking down and tapping the sculptured side with his foot. He then pointed to a sculptured device in low relief at the bottom corner of the pillar, which formed the front support of the throne or chair—the head of a hawk surmounted by a circle or globe, and what appeared to be a sceptre in front of it. Pressing the point of his toe on the globe, the pillar revolved and disclosed an opening sufficiently large for a man to squeeze through; then, when he pressed the sceptre, the pillar revolved again and the aperture was closed. He looked meaningly at Dick saying: 'Within is also the head of the hawk and it will close. It is a chamber for many men, and the air is good. It is for the hour of danger!'

Dick gazed in silence from the movable pillar to the face of the Sheikh, at the moment only half realising his meaning. The Professor and Harry had passed through the temple doorway; the Sheikh lingered as if he had more to say, then spoke swiftly: 'There is danger in the Soudan. Your eyes have not seen the armies of the locust sweep over the land. So is it. The Sirdar is confident. The English is all time confident. The lion roars and he says—it sports itself, it is at play. The lion sleeps and he says—it is dead. He thinks it is no danger; but see the lion's teeth is in his flesh. The English have the good heart, but no eyes. So is it; all time confident. Hicks Pasha is confident; he is eaten up. The General Baker is confident. Where is he? So is it. English boy Dick forget it not.'

They passed out into the sunshine, Dick sobered and thoughtful; the Sheikh quite gay, as if he had got something off his mind.

The Professor returned to the pylons of the temple court, and spent much time in examining these towers and in deciphering half-obliterated inscriptions and the vestiges of sculpture on the walls. Here Harry had the ill-luck to fall over some loose fragments, and give his ankle a severe wrench. It was the same foot that had suffered on board the dahabeeyah, and as he could not walk, he had to sit on a heap of rubbish and look ruefully at the agility of the others.

The sun was fast sinking in the west when they started to tramp homeward. The Sheikh took Harry on his back, and stepped lightly from stone to stone among the ruins and strode across the sand with the greatest ease, as if his burthen were but a featherweight.

'Next time we take you out for a walk, we will bring the ship of the desert,' said Dick.

'It's chronic,' was Harry's only reply, and they plodded on in silence, Dick busy pondering the words of the Arab, and putting two and two together.

(Continued on page 174.)

THE TAME FISH OF LOGAN.

THERE are many fish-ponds in Europe in which such fish as carp are kept and tamed. But there is only one fish-pond known to us in which sea-water fish are tamed enough to come half-out of the water

to be fed. It is at Port Logan, in Wigtonshire, Scotland.

Not far from the little fishing village of Port Logan stands a small white cottage, at the east point of Logan Bay, looking out on the Irish Channel. Close at hand to it lies the famous pond. The keeper, who lives in the little white cottage, opens a door for you, and you go down a flight of stone steps leading to what looks like a huge well, hewn out of the solid rock, with edges made smooth by the ebb and flow of countless tides. He points out to you the opening, low down on one side, through which the sea comes and goes, keeping the water of the great deep pool fresh and clean. Then, out of a basket, he takes a handful of mussels, limpets, whelks, and other things which sea-fish are fond of. He gives a peculiar whistle as he reaches the lowest step, and you watch intently.

Fish come scrambling from all parts of the pond—jostling and pushing against each other in their haste to reach the edge of the step where their guardian stands. When he bends down to offer them some of the food, you see codfish and haddock and other rovers of the sea thrust their heads out of the water—to within half an inch of their gills—and take the food with joyful gulps.

Occasionally he throws some of the tit-bits far out, and the fish turn about and race away for it, the haddocks and smaller fish swimming at the back of their more powerful comrades, and taking their chance when the food is thrown in scattered handfuls.

Over a hundred years ago a Laird of Logan had the pool hollowed out in the rock, and on one side made the opening to the sea; but this outlet is so cross-barred that the fish cannot escape with the ebb of the waters. There is no need to suppose the captives would escape if they could; for they are very well fed, and are contented with their safe and comfortable quarters.

The fish do not quarrel, and the big ones do not prey on the rest, because the regular and ample supply of food every day for all of them keeps them from being hungry.

Now and again, at long intervals, the high tide does not reach the pond, and then the fish mope and die; but in times of storm it rises far above the ordinary level. Yet the weather that affects the fish-pond of Logan comes very seldom, and the captives live long.

Sometimes, when rough weather keeps the fishermen of Port Logan ashore, and the Laird of Logan up at the 'big hoose' wants fish, a big bag-like net is put in, the pond is netted, and many of the tame fish caught and taken up to Logan House. But there are always a number of the old inhabitants of the pool left in the water to tame the new-comers. For, as soon as the sea permits, the fishermen go out and cast their nets. A tank in one of their herring-boats serves to bring the newly-caught fish to shore safely, and they are carried to the pool.

The taming of them is not an easy matter. For more than a year the captives are wild and sullen; but time and patience and the habits of the tamed fish work wonders with the newcomers. Then wild ones also learn to come to the whistle of the keeper as he steps down the great stone staircase with food for them all, and, just like dogs, to raise themselves out of the water and snap at the provisions.

ACROSS THE WATER.

VI.—MECHANICAL BRIDGES.

MOST bridges are stationary, and are made to carry a road across a river or a deep valley; but there are also mechanical bridges, in which either the whole or part of the structure can be moved upward or sideways.

These bridges are designed either as a defence or in order that, at certain times of the day, the waterway beneath them may be left clear for large steamers and sailing-ships to pass through.

The earliest mechanical bridges were certainly the drawbridges, and remains of these may still be seen in many places; for in mediæval times every large castle and fortified town was surrounded by a strong wall and a ditch, or moat, and over this moat were bridges that could be raised at nightfall, and when there was danger of an enemy's attack.

There are many stories of occasions when a fortress was taken by surprise, and the drawbridge was only let down just in time to prevent the entrance of the foe.

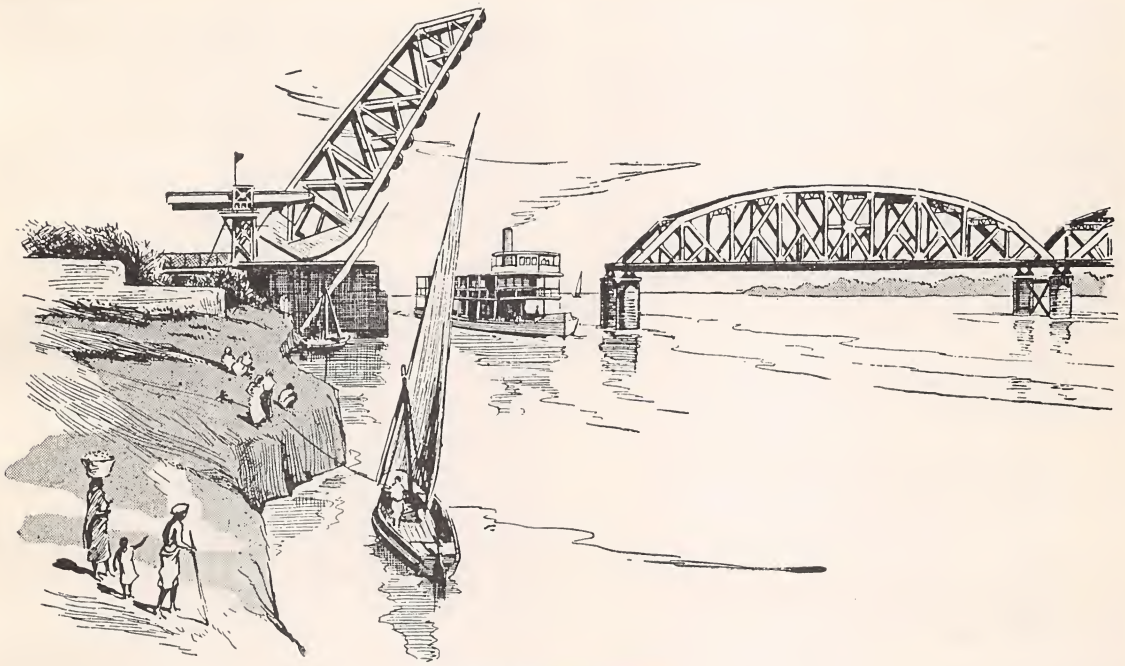
At Mons, in 1572, when the town was captured by Louis of Nassau, the drawbridge at one of the gates was actually being lifted when the Prince, with his troops, reached the opposite side of the moat. A brave French officer, Guitry de Chaumont, seeing what was happening, urged his horse forward, and made it spring on to the rising platform, which sunk again beneath his weight; Prince Louis and his soldiers were thus able to enter the town in triumph.

Another early form of mechanical bridge was called the 'Flying Bridge,' and this structure is thus described in an old eighteenth-century book, which has, besides, a quaint engraving of the bridge itself:

'The flying bridge is composed of two boats, joined together by a sort of flooring, and surrounded by a rail or balustrade, having also one or two masts, to which is fastened a cable, supported at proper distances by boats, and extended to an anchor in the middle of the water. By which contrivance the bridge becomes movable, like a pendulum, from one side of the river to the other, without any other help than the rudder.' These bridges were evidently largely used for military purposes, for



The Kasr-el-Nil Bridge, Cairo.



The Khartoum Bridge.

the author goes on to say that they sometimes consisted of two stories, for the quicker passage of a great number of men, or for infantry and cavalry at once.

Bridges made in exactly this way can still be seen on the Rhine, and other swift-flowing rivers, where the force of the current easily carries the movable platform backwards and forwards.

The famous Tower Bridge, which crosses the Thames near the Tower of London, is a very wonderful mechanical structure. It was built at the end of the last century, and consists really of two bridges, the lower being a roadway for heavy traffic, which can be raised at intervals to allow ships to pass through. The upper bridge is for foot-passengers, and is reached by lifts at either end. It is intended for use during the time that the drawbridge below is raised.

Another very celebrated movable bridge is the Kasr-el-Nil, which crosses the Nile in Cairo, and which, until quite lately, was the only bridge across the river in the city.

At stated times during the day, part of the structure is swung round, so that the steamers, dahabeeyahs, and native sailing-boats, with their tall lateen sails, may go through. There is always a great deal of traffic over this bridge, and, while it is open, it is curious to see the crowds of natives, herds of goats and cattle, and long lines of heavily-laden camels, waiting on either side of the river until the roadway is clear.

Further up the Nile, at Khartoum, there is another great movable bridge. It crosses the river near the palace, where, in 1884, General Gordon was killed by the Mahdi's soldiers.

There is still a third type of mechanical bridge, and this is the most modern, and, perhaps, the strangest of

any. It is called the 'transbordeur,' or transport bridge, and fine examples can be seen at Rouen, at Las Arenas, in Spain, and at the Tunisian port of Bizerta.

These transport bridges are very suitable for places where the traffic of the waterway is greater than that of the roadway above, and where it is necessary for ships to be able to pass up and down the river—or, as at Bizerta, in and out of the port—at all times, and not only at intervals during the day.

The 'transbordeurs,' therefore, consist of a strong structure, high enough to allow the tallest vessels to pass beneath it. From it is suspended a car, or platform. This car travels backwards and forwards across the river, at a short distance above the water, and on a level with the road on either bank. There is room on the car for a number of horse-vehicles and motors, besides foot-passengers.

The earliest of these strange-looking bridges was the one in Spain, across the river Nervion. This was completed in 1893, while the 'transbordeur' at Rouen was begun in 1898, and finished two years later.

Before the days of wonderful and elaborate mechanical bridges, and, most likely, even before drawbridges were invented, there were in existence movable bridges of a very simple type. These were boat bridges, which consisted merely of a number of large boats, or pontoons, placed closely side by side across a river, fastened together, and surmounted by a wooden platform and roadway. A section of such a bridge is movable, and can be opened when necessary.

Sometimes these bridges of boats are only temporary, and intended for the passage of troops, but there are many ancient and permanent ones still in existence. Among others is the great Galata Bridge, at Constantinople.

tinople, which crosses the Golden Horn, and connects the old city of St moul with the more modern suburbs of Galata and Pera.

There are other bridges of this description at several places on the Rhine; and, strangely enough, Rouen, which now has its great 'transbordeur,' was celebrated more than a hundred years ago for a bridge of boats, which eighteenth-century writers declare to have been one of the wonders of the period. It was, we are told, nearly three hundred feet long, and was paved with stone; so that, although there was no rail on either side, horses, vehicles, and foot-passengers could cross it with ease and safety.

THE WIDE-AWAKES.

BABY, the sun is asleep in the west;
The waves have their night-caps on;
The flowers are nodding to Mother Earth;
The birds to their nests have gone.

The ant and the bee have ceased to toil,
The grass had its bath of dew;
All little things are fast asleep,
Saving the owl and you—

Who are singing in concert, 'Boo, boo, boo!
Tu-whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!'
Baby, I'd leave that song to the owl,
If I were you—you—you.

MARGARET ERSKINE.

HEROES OF OTHER DAYS.

I.—DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

THE Cape of Good Hope was rounded in 1488 by the Portuguese navigator, Bartolomeu Diaz. In the following century it was visited by English ships, whose captains more than once projected a settlement there for furnishing supplies to vessels bound to and from India. In 1652 this idea was put into operation by the Dutch East India Company, who founded then the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. The success of this settlement in the southernmost part of Africa soon attracted the attention of the English and French, and in the last quarter of the eighteenth century it was clear that this great strategical point would not remain much longer in the keeping of a Dutch chartered company, but be seized on one pretext or another by Great Britain or France. To forestall any such attempt on the part of France, the Cape of Good Hope was occupied by British troops in 1796, the action being taken under the authority of the exiled Chief Magistrate of Holland, the Prince of Orange. In 1806 the British hold over South Africa was made permanent by the annexation of Cape Colony. The Dutch East India Company had come to an end, and its possessions had been transferred to the Dutch Government.

The result of this action on the part of Great Britain brought speedily in its train Scottish and English missionaries sent out by the Free Churches of Great Britain and by the Church of England. These missionaries were men of dauntless courage, whom nothing could dismay—neither the rumoured fierceness of the savage tribes, the really dangerous boldness of lions, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes; neither the bitter cold of the lofty tablelands and mountains, nor the frightful heat

and lack of water in the deserts. Before thirty years had elapsed after the British annexation of Cape Colony, British and American missionaries had penetrated to the hitherto unknown regions of Damaraland, Bechuanaland, Zululand, and the Transvaal. Prominent amongst these pioneers was the Rev. Robert Moffat, from the south-east of Scotland. On his return to England for a much-needed rest in 1840, he met at a missionary conference in London a sallow-faced, dark-eyed, dark-haired Scot from Glasgow University, David Livingstone, who was then completing his studies for a missionary career in London and qualifying as a Doctor of Medicine. Listening to the public appeals and the private conversation of Moffat (whose daughter he was afterwards to marry), David Livingstone decided to open his missionary career in South Africa instead of China, the region to which his thoughts had first been turned.

He was born at the (then) pretty little town of Blantyre, about eight miles to the south of Glasgow, on March 19th, 1813, in a substantial, stone-built, almost castle-like, house overlooking the River Clyde. His father, Neil Livingstone (a Highlander by descent), was a retail dealer in tea, who, whilst carrying his tea from house to house and village to village, also sold books. He was a man of some education for his time and state, but his business did not prosper; he was very poor, and his children naturally had to earn their living as early as possible. Consequently David and his brothers went to work at a cotton-spinning factory where their grandfather had been employed.

From his earliest years, however, David Livingstone was ardently fond of reading. When not at the factory he was at the school (generally at night-time), and when only ten years old he purchased a Latin grammar out of his first earnings at the factory. Whenever he could get out for a walk, he studied geology in the local stone-quarries, or botany on the hills or in the woods. The world seemed to him so profoundly interesting that he yearned for opportunities of studying its wonders. The writings of a German missionary on China made him desirous of going out to that wonderful empire as a medical missionary. His parents and his elder brother sympathised with this idea, and assisted him to enter as a student in Glasgow University when he was twenty-three years of age. He offered his services to the London Missionary Society in 1837, and in 1838 he went to London as one of their probationers. His sweet, simple disposition and quiet enthusiasm made him many friends in the great city, and the Society he had agreed to serve did their best for him. He was sent at their expense to study Latin, Greek, and Hebrew under a clergyman tutor at Chipping Ongar, in Essex. For nearly two years also he studied medicine and surgery in the London hospitals; and at length, at the close of 1840, having obtained his Doctor's degree in Glasgow, and been ordained as a missionary in London, he took ship for South Africa.

On his lengthy voyage to the Cape of Good Hope by way of Brazil, he did not waste his enforced leisure, but applied himself, with the assistance of the captain, to learning the art of navigation, especially as regards the fixing of the position by latitude and longitude. In the summer of 1841 he reached Kuruman, in what is now British Bechuanaland. This place was then the headquarters of the London Missionary Society in the interior of South Africa. To the north of Kuruman

very little was known, but already vague rumours were coming through the Bechuana people of a region with lakes and trees lying far away to the north-west of the stony and sandy deserts, which were then so characteristic of Bechuanaland. Livingstone had scarcely taken up his residence at Kuruman before his curiosity was aroused by these reports, and he conceived a great longing to travel due north from Bechuanaland to Abyssinia as soon as he should have acquired some knowledge of a native language. He set himself industriously, therefore, to learn Bechuana, the language of the Bechuana tribes.

Robert Moffat and his wife had made their home at Kuruman, and Livingstone married their daughter Mary in 1844. Soon afterwards, he made a home for himself to the north-east, near the borders of the Transvaal State. From this point he and his wife moved still further north to Chonuane, the headquarters of a great Bechuana chief, Sechele, King of the Bakwena tribe. Sechele was a great friend of Sebituane, who was the leader of the Makololo people.

The Makololo, who were to influence so profoundly the journeys of David Livingstone, were a clan that originally lived in Basutoland; but the terrible convulsions amongst the native races in South Africa (started by the Zulu conquests and raids in Natal and Eastern Cape Colony) sent the people of Basutoland flying in all directions. One of these fugitive tribes, known as the Makololo, became in its turn a conquering people. Its warriors ranged far to the north till they had crossed the Kalahari Desert and made themselves masters of the Barotse country, on the upper Zambesi. Sechele, of the Bakwena, being in close relations with his friend and helper, Sebituane, was able to give to Livingstone still more information about the wonderful regions north of the Kalahari Desert—of how there were great flowing rivers, lakes of open water (salt or fresh), groves of tall trees, immense stretches of green grass or tall reeds, and abundance of food.

Even round about where Livingstone resided in those days, in the North-west Transvaal, the country had a wonderful aspect, inasmuch as it swarmed with big game to a degree which we could not probably see anywhere now in the Africa of the twentieth century. It would have been almost impossible to go for a three-hours' walk from Livingstone's little settlement without beholding herds of zebra and antelope, ostriches, perhaps a lion or a troop of lions, a leopard, or a chita; one would run the risk of being tossed and smashed by a great angry white rhinoceros or black rhinoceros; in the thickets and the defiles of the wooded hills there were elephants and buffalo; farther into the desert country on the west there were the giraffe, oryx, and the springbok gazelle; hyenas howled and laughed every night; jackals, with their beautiful black, silver, and red-gold fur, flitted about on the outskirts of the settlement and the native villages; eagles, vultures, hawks, soared in the heavens spying out prey, living or dead; it was a land teeming with wonderful forms of life. The larger streams that united to form the great Limpopo River were infested with crocodiles; the sandy districts with poisonous snakes; the woods and rocks with pythons and with great man-like baboons or those wonderful little hyraxes, who reproduce pretty closely for us to-day the semblance of the earliest hoofed mammals dwelling on the earth four or five million years ago.

(Continued on page 174.)

OUR SECRET SOCIETY.

I.

JIMMY MEADOWS, one of Geoff's school friends, had read a story about Sherlock Holmes, and he was telling it to Geoff and Mouse and me in the summer-house. It was a lovely tale; it made your flesh creep with horror and yet all the time you felt you simply must hear the end. I thought even Sherlock Holmes would never be able to find out who had done the crime. But in the end he did.

I broke right into the middle of one of Jimmy's sentences to say: 'Let's do the same. Let's be a society to unravel mysteries—it would be such glorious fun.'

Geoff turned up his nose and said 'Rot,' but Jimmy was nicer.

'I don't see why we shouldn't,' he said slowly. 'It's a jolly good idea. The village is not very big, but then some of Sherlock's worst cases were in the tiniest places, and I expect there are all sorts of mysterious things going on around us, if only we knew.'

He waved his arm round the summer-house, and I began to feel quite giddy with excitement. There might be a villain under the seat, or hiding among the bushes outside.

'We must band ourselves together into a society,' said Jimmy. 'Join hands, all of you, and vow you will never reveal any secrets of the clan.'

We vowed, and after that we fixed the name as the S. S. F. U. D. M., or the Select Society for Unravelling Deep Mysteries. It was at this point that I thought I heard a chuckle outside. The idea of a villain ready to hand flashed into my mind, but I said nothing. It seemed better to wait till our plans for unravelling were quite ready.

We were having holidays at the time, and so we had plenty of time to look round for mysteries. I was the first to find one. I was taking a note from Mother to Mrs. Beavdon, and on the way I went past Rose Cottage where Mr. Neville lives. He is a great friend of ours and writes books, so that he is usually at home most of the day. We usually 'Coo-ee' when we go past his window, and this morning as usual he looked up and waved.

It must have been about half an hour after this when I was coming back. I was still some little way off Rose Cottage, but the road was straight, and I could see all along it perfectly. To my horror I saw Mr. Neville creeping stealthily down his garden, carrying a large white box. I felt sure something was going to happen, so I thought of the S. S. F. U. D. M., and stood out of sight and watched. When he got to the gate, Mr. Neville looked round as if he were afraid of being seen, then he darted across to Sweet Briar Cottage, pushed open the back gate and disappeared inside. I was thunderstruck. Sweet Briar Cottage, besides being the only house in the lane except Mr. Neville's, was empty. So what could he want inside? and what was that mysterious box under his arm?

I rushed home and found Geoff. 'Sherlock,' I whispered in his ear. 'Jolly!' he cried, and he ran off to find Jimmy, while I found Mouse. Soon we were all four in the summer-house and I was telling my tale.

(Concluded on page 170.)



"I saw Mr. Neville creeping stealthily down his garden."



“‘Take the boxes if you like, but let me go.’”

OUR SECRET SOCIETY.

(Concluded from page 167.)

II.

'AND he had a box?' said Jimmy.

'A big one,' I answered. 'It seemed heavy, too. Now why should he be taking a heavy box into an empty house?'

No one had any answer ready, and when Geoff suggested that we should go and explore Sweet Briar Cottage that afternoon, when Mr. Neville would be playing golf, we all thought it was a grand idea.

At half-past two we set off, Jimmy, Geoff, Mouse, and I. We soon got to Sweet Briar Cottage. The back gate was unlatched and we went in. Great weeds grew everywhere, for the house had been empty for more than a year; but round by the outhouses they had been trampled down as if some one had been prowling round. We pushed open the tool-shed door. It was empty. A potting-out shed stood next, and this too was quite bare.

'So much for your mysteries, Madge,' said Geoff scornfully.

I didn't answer. I unlatched the wash-house and walked inside, but at last even I had to confess there was nothing. We were just going away when my eye fell on the copper for boiling clothes. The lid was on. I snatched it off. Then I cried softly, 'Hurrah!' The others crowded round, and there at the bottom of the copper lay a box, nailed down and sealed.

'Is it a bomb?' said Mouse cheerfully. This was a new idea, and I hastily shut down the lid.

'Goose!' said Geoff, 'as if Mr. Neville—our Mr. Neville—would have anything to do with bombs! All the same, Madge, I agree it looks queer. Let's get out and think it over.'

Very quietly we tiptoed down the grass-covered path and went home.

We set off again next afternoon, and when we looked inside the copper we saw another big box lying on top of the other one!

Even Geoff was upset by this, and muttered something about being 'queer.'

'Is it more bombs?' whispered Mouse.

'Little silly,' I answered. 'Of course it isn't.' But all the same we hurried out as fast as we could.

In the end it was Geoff who made up the plan that unravelled the mystery. We were all to meet at half-past nine and hide in the wash-house to watch. Then if Mr. Neville were to come, we could surround him and not let him go till he had explained.

Promptly at half-past nine the next morning we set off and hid carefully; and about half an hour later Mr. Neville stepped into the cottage.

When he saw us he gave a cry. 'Oh, please don't give me away,' he gasped. 'Take the boxes if you like, but let me go.'

He turned and fled, as if he were in a fright, though I thought I heard him give a chuckle.

We were so taken aback that we let him get off without making a struggle for it. Geoff blamed me, Jimmy blamed Geoff, and I blamed them both. Mouse was the only one who said nothing.

My eye fell on the new box. It looked just like the others, and had great red seals all over it. 'He said we might keep the boxes,' I said, 'so let's look inside.'

'Here?' said Jimmy.

'No; in the rendezvous at home,' cried Geoff.

They were too heavy to carry, so in the afternoon we brought a barrow and took them off to the summer-house.

We laid the boxes out in a row, then we got a screw-driver and a hammer, and between us we opened the first case. We shut our eyes and pulled off the lid between us, so that if there were any danger we should share it alike. But what do you think was inside? Stones, just ordinary stones, and on the top lay a card, which said: 'To the Members of that Excellent Body, known as the Select Society for Unravelling Deep Mysteries, with best compliments, from The Villain.' Then underneath was written: 'Please come and have tea with me on Saturday at 4.30. Your Friend, Roger Neville.'

Each of the other boxes was exactly the same, and we knew that we had been tricked.

Exactly at half-past four we turned in at Mr. Neville's gate. He met us on the doorstep with a huge smile on his face.

'So you're not afraid of the villain,' he said. 'Come in and taste my seed-cake. It's made from a secret recipe and it's splendid.'

Whilst we were having tea we asked him how he had found out about the S. S. F. U. D. M.

'Why,' he said, 'just think of the position of your summer-house. One side looks out on to Bluebell Common, and it happened that I was sitting snugly under the shade of your hut, when you began to discuss your plans. I thought that there would not be many mysteries in a little village like this, so I made up one for you to unravel!'

'Then I heard you!' I cried, jumping up. 'When we were in the rendezvous I was sure I heard a chuckle outside, but I didn't say anything to the rest because we had hardly begun unravelling! And you filled those boxes on purpose to give us something to do?'

'Exactly,' said Mr. Neville gravely.

'Then why did you choose Sweet Briar Cottage?' asked Jimmy. 'The owner might have found you out.'

'The owner being myself,' said Mr. Neville 'I didn't run much risk there. No, I was just playing a game, like you were; only you only knew one side—I knew both.'

'I always said you weren't a villain,' said Geoff.

'Thank you,' said Mr. Neville, 'I propose your health in tea. Here's to Master Geoff Brown, and all the other members of that jolly society—the S. S. F. U. D. M.'

Then Geoff proposed Mr. Neville's health, and we all drank it and cheered. He made a speech in reply and said he would never reveal the meaning of the letters S. S. F. U. D. M., and after that we went home, feeling that no one else in the village belonged to such a jolly society as ours.

'If all the mysteries we unravel end up as decently as this, we shall have some fun,' I said.

'Rather!' echoed Jimmy and Geoff.

E. L. ELIAS.

THE RUSSIAN ERMINE.

THE Russian ermine is an animal something like a weasel. During the summer season, its colour is a light reddish brown on the upper part of the body, and creamy-looking underneath. As winter approaches, the short thick fur changes colour, becoming a delicate

creamy white. The tip of the tail, however, is black. (These tail-tips give to the fur its rich contrast of black and white.) The ermine which furnishes the most valuable fur is found only in Russia and Siberia. For many years this kind of fur has been worn by kings, and judges of high degree, as part of their official dress, its whiteness being considered an emblem of their uprightness and integrity.

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

V.—BRUSSELS.

IN the old times Belgium was called the 'Low Countries,' and as this name shows, it was divided into a number of separate states. One of the principal of these was Brabant, which had for its capital Brussels, and was ruled by powerful dukes.

Brussels six hundred years ago was a very different place to the gay, fashionable town, the miniature Paris, which many of us know so well. There were no boulevards then, crowded with carriages and motor-cars; there were no railway stations or tramway lines, and no promenades or outlying suburbs. The Brussels of the middle ages had narrow, ill-paved streets, the gabled houses were clustered closely together round the great Gothic public buildings, and the whole city was encircled with strong battlemented walls.

There are still some relics of the past left in modern Brussels, and if we stand in the Grand Place to-day, with the wonderful Hôtel de Ville on one side and the Maison de Roi on the other, it is easy to picture what the mediæval capital of Brabant was like; but except this square and the Church of St. Gudule, very few of the ancient buildings remain. Brussels has passed through many trials, and in one siege more than four thousand houses were destroyed.

In the fourteenth century Brabant had as its ruler a prince named Wenceslas, who had married Joan, the daughter and heiress of the last Duke of the province. The pair reigned as Duke and Duchess, but their rights were disputed by the powerful Count of Flanders, whose wife was Joan's younger sister.

In August, 1356, the Count marched against Brussels with a large army, and after a fierce battle, Joan, who was governing the city in the absence of her husband, was forced to surrender.

Brussels, however, did not remain for long in Flemish hands, for less than three months after its capture, Everard T'Serclaes, a young knight in the service of Wenceslas, determined to get it back for his master.

T'Serclaes gathered together a small band of followers as brave and as reckless as himself, and on the night of October 24th these men succeeded in scaling the wall and entering the city. They hastened to the Hôtel de Ville, killed the guard, tore down the lion standard of Flanders, and roused the town, crying, 'Brabant for the Great Duke!'

The citize s welcomed the warriors, and were eager to return to their old allegiance, so the Flemish garrison were expelled, and the Duke and Duchess once more reigned in Brussels.

After this event Wenceslas set to work to renew the fortification of the capital, so that it might be able

to withstand attacks and to endure sieges. A strong wall was built round the city, with seven gates and a deep moat outside. These gates were always shut at nightfall, and belated inhabitants of Brussels were obliged to spend the night on the far side of the moat, exposed both to rain and cold, and to the taunts and jeers of their more fortunate fellow-citizens.

In 1695 Brussels had to endure a fearful ordeal, when a French army, consisting of sixty thousand men, marched upon the city, under the great general, Marshal Villeroi. This attack also took place in August, which always seems to have been an unlucky month for the Belgian capital, and for three days the town was bombarded with red-hot bullets. It was during these terrible days that the greater part of old Brussels perished, for we are told that four thousand houses, sixteen ancient churches, and many other fine buildings were destroyed.

Less than a hundred years later Brussels was bombarded again, this time by Marshal Saxe; and in 1789 a revolution took place, when the city was captured by its own citizens. On this occasion there was little fighting and less bloodshed, for it is said that those who knew how to shoot did not want to kill, and those who wanted to kill did not know how to shoot.

In the nineteenth century there was another revolution, but this was a much more serious and tragic affair. For many years the provinces of Belgium had been united to Holland, but in 1832 the inhabitants of the country revolted in order to regain their independence.

Taken by surprise, the Dutch evacuated Brussels in September, but later in the same month they made a desperate attempt to retake the city. The Belgians determined that they would resist with all the means in their power, so they rejected the command of the enemy to surrender the capital, and made preparations for its defence by strengthening the fortifications, erecting barricades in the streets, and organizing bands of volunteers.

The attack began on the morning of September 23rd; but, although at two points the Dutch succeeded in forcing their way through the gates of the city, it was only to find strong inner defences, and troops full of courage and prepared to contest every inch of ground.

Terrible fighting took place in the streets of Brussels during the next few days, and it is said that seven hundred Belgians and fifteen hundred Dutch were killed. In the end the enemy retired, and the brave Belgians were left in possession of their capital.

More than eighty years passed away after those tragic autumn days of 1832, days of peace and prosperity, when it almost seemed as if the fighting days of the Belgians had come to an end, and as if they were forgetting their old glories and their old traditions.

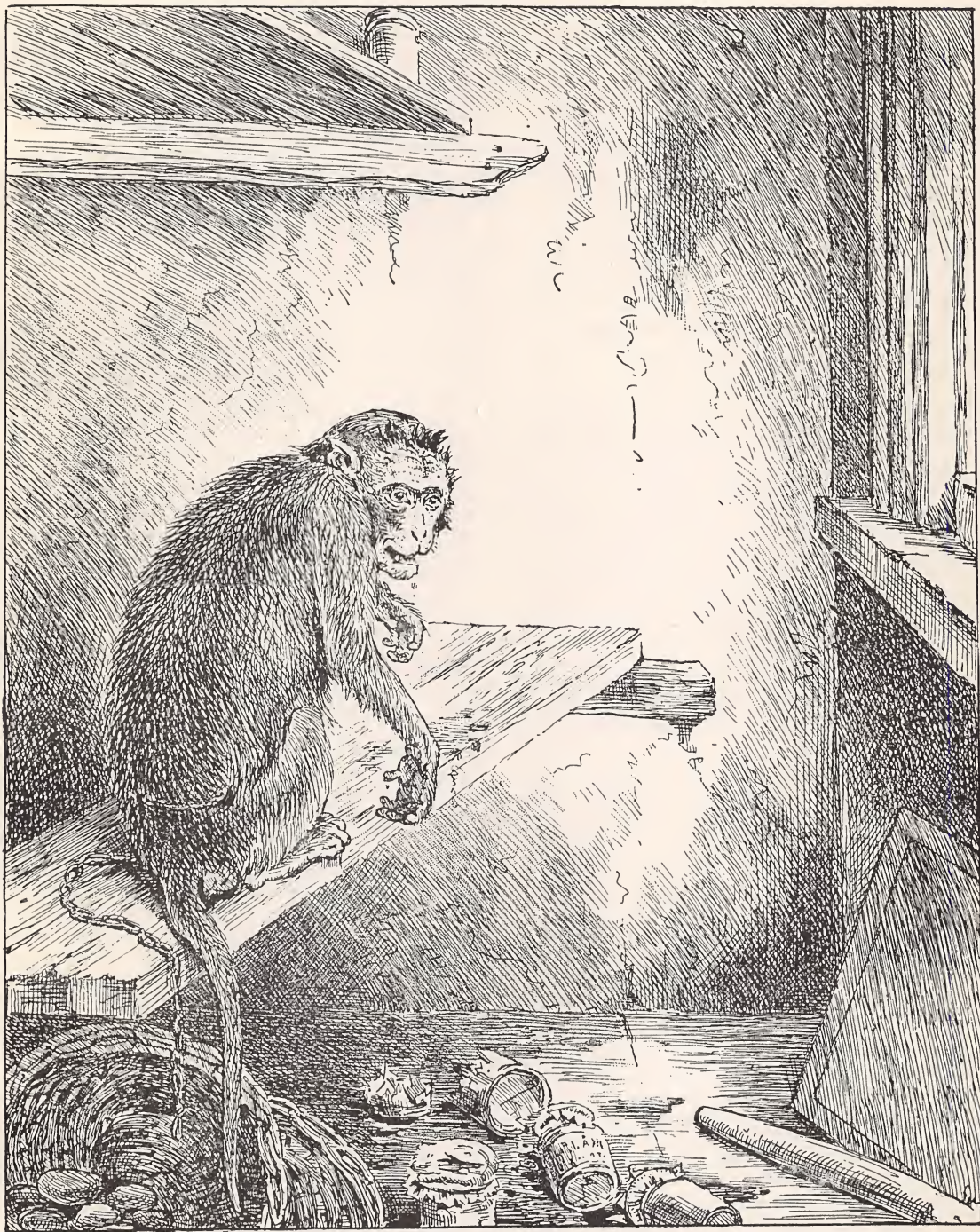
Then in the summer of 1914—in August again—a change came, and once more Europe, and with it Belgium, was plunged suddenly into all the horrors and sufferings of a great war.

Brussels is no longer a fortified city, so instead of barring its gates to the invading army it was obliged to submit to the humiliation of surrender, and to wait patiently under the hard rule of an insolent enemy, while the Belgian army and the Belgian King fought its battles, and took their share, with all the courage and fortitude of the past, in the struggle for liberty and civilisation.

A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.



"These men succeeded in scaling the wall and entering the city."



“The jars with a crash he soon flung on the floor.”

A MISCHIEVOUS MONKEY.

ONE day, 'twas in summer, and bright was the sky,
The lark sung in gladness her carols on high;
The soft winds were straying, and—as it befell—
Old Jacko, the monkey, was straying as well.

It chanced on that day he had broken his chain—
He made up his mind none should catch him again;
Said he to himself, ‘Now at last I am free,
I mean to be happy as happy can be.’

He entered the kitchen, he crept up the stair,
And made for the attic—'twas lonely and bare,
Except for the jars which were placed on the shelf.
Now Jacko was really enjoying himself!

The jars with a crash he soon flung on the floor,
Then looked all around to discover some more.
But hark! what was that? With his heart beating
faster,

He saw on the threshold the form of his master!

The crash of the jars gave the secret away:
Unseen he had entered the house on that day.
His freedom was over—'twas perfectly plain
Such mischievous monkeys are best on their chain.

HEROES OF OTHER DAYS.

I.—DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

(Continued from page 167.)

THE earliest missionaries had not been silent about the wonderful fauna of inner South Africa: their stories and their written accounts came under the notice of many a bold trader-adventurer who was trying his luck in Cape Colony, and of equally adventurous army officers going to or coming from India and stopping at the Cape on their way. The result was that Livingstone had not long resided at Chonuanne and Kolobēn before he became the host of exploring sportsmen who were finding their way into the Northern Transvaal, either to shoot elephants and enrich themselves by the sale of their ivory tusks, or who desired to buy from the natives tusks and skins.

Already there were difficulties in the path of these adventurers. A proportion of the Dutch colonists of Cape Colony had grown to dislike the action of the British Government, partly on account of our abolition of slavery and our interference to prevent the natives of South Africa being enslaved or treated unfairly. These dissatisfied 'Boers' (as they were called, from the Dutch word for farmer) had, a few years before Livingstone's arrival and settlement, migrated across the Orange and Vaal Rivers and founded new colonies, to be known subsequently as the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Disgusted that the British should already have taken Cape Colony and Natal—regions which had first been discovered and settled by the Dutch—the Transvaal Boers resolved as far as possible to prevent British missionaries or sportsmen from entering the country to the north of the Orange and Vaal Rivers, which they had virtually conquered by their bold attacks on the Zulu chief, Mosilikatse. So that not only did they check missionary enterprise from proceeding to the north-east, but they occasionally made things unpleasant for British sportsmen likewise.

Such a man as David Livingstone, speaking well the native language, and a thoroughgoing friend and confidant of a great native chief like Sechele, was an invaluable counsellor to all honest men who desired to see the wonders of the land and to trade fairly with the natives. Amongst such visitors to Kolobēn was an Indian civilian officer, William Cotton Oswell, together with his friend, Captain Murray. Livingstone told Oswell native stories about the regions of great rivers, lakes, and trees far to the north of the Kalahari Desert. Oswell decided to join company with him and make an attempt to discover at any rate one of these lakes.

Accordingly they set out in the early summer of 1849. After an anxious and weary journey across the desert, they, to their intense joy, arrived abruptly at the banks of a flowing stream, known as the Zouga or Botletle. Following this stream westwards, they reached Lake Ngami, then of much greater extent as regards open water than at the present day.

This great discovery made a tremendous sensation when the news of it reached England. It was an indication that the interior of Central Africa was not the hopeless desert that some geographers had imagined. Livingstone, harassed by the Boers, disheartened by the constant droughts which afflicted the Bechuana people, and tended to depopulate the country, was keen now to leave Bechuanaland behind him, and establish his home and his teaching amongst the powerful Makololo tribe in South-central Africa. He was confident of being able to make as great a friend of Sebituane as he had done of Sechele. Oswell was equally anxious to make great discoveries in the African interior. He was a

man of some means, and was also making money by the tusks of the many elephants he shot. He contributed, therefore, to the cost of these exploring journeys as some return to the Livingstones for the hospitality and the assistance they gave him. In consequence, Oswell and Livingstone travelled together from Lake Ngami northwards, and reached the Zambezi at a place called Sesheke in June, 1851. To get to Sesheke, where they expected to meet Sebituane, they passed through a confusing network of rivers, streams, and marshes; and when they reached the Zambezi, they only called it at first 'Sesheke.' It was some time before they realised they were actually on the upper waters of the great river which flowed into the Indian Ocean in Portuguese East Africa. Unfortunately, a few days after meeting Sebituane, the great Makololo chief died, but as one of his dying wishes, he expressed the hope that his people would assist Livingstone to explore their country.

However, the latter could not do so with his present equipment and circumstances, so he conveyed his family back to Kolobēn and thence to Capetown. Whilst his wife and children returned to England from the Cape, Livingstone set himself to work at the Cape Observatory, so that he might become an expert geographer. Then, fitting himself out with such stores as he was able to procure, and purchasing these for the most part by the sale of the gifts of ivory made to him by Sechele and other African chiefs, he returned to his old home at Kolobēn (to find that it had been raided and destroyed by the Boers), and set out once more to cross the Kalahari Desert in waggons, and arrive at the Makololo capital in the Chobe marshes, not far from the Zambezi.

(Concluded on page 186.)

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 163.)

CHAPTER XI.

HARRY'S foot was swollen and painful, and it was with a very doleful countenance he watched Dick and Selim the next day preparing for an expedition to the Dismal Swamp. A small parcel of provisions was packed in the corner of a very large game-bag, which

illustrated the bigness of their hopes. Dick was feeling great, for he carried over his shoulder Uncle Charlie's gun, its weight seeming to add to the lightness of his feet. He was sorry to leave Harry behind, but there was no help for it.

'Never mind, old chap,' he said; 'you give your foot a good rest to-day, and it will be all right to-morrow, like it was on board the *Isis*. There's nothing like the rest-cure for things of that sort.'

Harry sat outside the tent looking after them, and glancing disconsolately at the injured foot. 'Rest-cure,' he repeated in disgust. 'Very fine, Master Dick. I suppose we don't forget when you had the measles. Rest-cure—humbug!—the man who invented it ought to have been turned into a chrysalis; resting won't do it any good, and I'm not going to stick here all day long. The best thing is to practise it.'

So with the aid of two sticks, and with many a wince and groan, he tried this mode of treatment, which consisted in hobbling up and down in front of the tent—two steps and a grunt, two steps and a rest, and two steps and a grunt again; then he sat down and ruminated. He was thinking of the sandy tract at the edge of the oasis, where they had seen the lizards the previous day, and which was at no great distance from the spot where he sat. 'What an ass I am,' he said to himself. 'I might have gone a hundred yards step by step whilst I have been crawling backwards and forwards here, and that's all been wasted; I could just as well have gone straight on and got as far as the lizard place. That's what I'll do, and if I can't walk I'll hop, and when I can't hop any longer I'll crawl.'

Harry made the attempt, and sure enough in this way, though not without many a twinge, in less than half an hour he had reached the spot. There he lay at full length beneath a bush till the sun was high overhead, waiting to see if any frolicsome little creature would put in an appearance.

He was not doomed to disappointment, for after a time he saw to his delight two or three lizards darting among the stems of the heathery-looking shrubs that grew there. The sun glinted on their bright scales as they glided among the twigs and moss. With a rapid movement of his hand Harry endeavoured to seize one, only to find that the tail remained in his hand, while the little creature had disappeared, and the lost tail began to dance a jig on the ground.

No more little elves appearing, he thought he would go further, and hearing the report of a gun at no great distance, came to the conclusion that he could not be so very far from the Dismal Swamp, and determined to practise the lame foot to the extent of going there, and perhaps finding Dick before the fun was over.

He saw nothing of the sportsmen at the Dismal Swamp, nor did he hear the report of the gun again, and the treatment had not improved his foot; it was swollen and very painful. 'I'll just have a look round,' he thought, 'and then make tracks for home—it looks as if it were getting late.'

However, he could not resist the temptation of the pools in the dry lake, and leaning over one of these which lay close to the bank he looked in its depths, and was lost to all else but its small denizens—newts, water-spiders, the snaky tentacles of fresh-water hydra, and now and again the dim vision of a fish.

When he looked up from this enchanting little world the sun had set, and it was growing dark; he rose

hastily and started homeward in the same lame fashion as before.

The outward journey and the return are very different things, and this he found, as with foot throbbing and thoroughly tired by his awkward mode of progression, he slowly and painfully dragged along step by step, making many pauses to rest.

It was now dark, and he sat down, feeling as if he could go no further. At this moment he was startled by a burst of laughter which rang out on the still air—horrible laughter that sent a pang right through him from chest to back. His first thought was—Selim. Now Selim had a diversity of strange laughs at his command, but he could not laugh in that terrible manner. Another laugh—a hideous maniac's laugh, and yet another fearsome and quite near, it seemed to clash into his ears, his hair actually bristled up, and there before him on the bank, silhouetted against the night sky, a terrible form—a lion was it?—writhing, springing in the air and dancing round with fiendish contortions.

And now it shot down the bank toward him, lost in the shadows, and he saw nothing of its outline—saw nothing but two eyes burning with inward light.

He dared not rise or turn his back on the beast, lest it should leap upon him. Swift thoughts rushed through his mind—Dick—if he only had the courage of Dick. His eyes went up for one instant to the skies with a prayer for that great gift. The eyeballs still glared upon him, a hideous face was thrust through the gloom almost into his own. With snarling mouth and gleaming teeth the ferocious beast was upon him.

He did not spring up, but with both hands gripped the thick stick which he had been using as a crutch and dashed it into the creature's mouth; the teeth closed on it and it split to fragments, and beast and boy rolled over together on the ground. Its breath was in his face, as with both hands he gripped its throat to force its muzzle up and away from him. Over again they rolled, snarling, struggling, the boy still holding on with bulldog grip.

A thought flashed through his mind—his hunting knife! He released his hold an instant to grip the knife at his belt—the creature's teeth were closing on his shoulder. He stabbed into the brute's chest, and stabbed again, and the creature rolled over and left him panting with the knife in his hand. He thrust himself free of the brute, his head swam, and he fell backward in a faint.

And so they found them side by side, the unconscious boy and the carcase of the shaggy beast.

When Dick and Selim returned from the Dismal Swamp with a brace of water-fowl and some snipe and found Harry missing, they were much perplexed. Neither Uncle Charlie or the Sheikh had seen him the whole day, and had fancied that somehow he had managed to accompany them. They became very anxious, and started to search the oasis, feeling sure that he could not have got very far. They arranged that two of them should go in one direction and two in the other, completing the circuit of the Dismal Swamp. The Professor and Dick were much alarmed at finding Harry in such a condition, and when the others appeared, the Sheikh carried the dazed, half-conscious figure in his arms, and Dick and Selim bore the dead brute on a long pole between them; and so they returned to camp.

(Continued on page 178.)



"The ferocious beast was upon him."



"From the tent came the tall figure of a swarthy barbarian."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 175.)

HARRY'S new treatment for the cure of a sprained ankle had not proved a success, so he did not repeat it the next day; in fact, he felt altogether very shaky. Dick slapped him on the back and thought him quite a hero to tackle such a monster.

'Weren't you awfully afraid?' said Dick, as they turned the formidable creature over and looked at its terrible jaws.

'Yes, I was,' Harry replied. 'I don't mind owning up, I'm afraid I am a coward; but I'll tell you a secret, Dick, I don't think I shall ever be quite so frightened again.'

Harry was proud of his spoil, and admired the repulsive-looking creature now it lay still at his feet. It was a tiger wolf or spotted hyæna, over five feet in length, not counting the tail, which measured sixteen inches; moreover, he coveted its skin, which he said would look fine in their room at home, adding, 'What would old Butterworth say to it, Dick?' alluding to his school chum of that name. Yes, he was very keen on having the spotted skin, and determined, with Selim's aid, to remove it. Before long they bore it to a secluded spot to perform the operation.

Dick, thus bereft of his two companions, had to fall back on his own resources. He watched them awhile with varying expressions of countenance which did not add to his good looks, and made some remarks on hyænas which were not borrowed from the explanatory lecture the Professor had given them the previous night; then he shouldered Uncle Charlie's gun, put some cartridges in his pocket, and started on another sporting expedition to the Dismal Swamp. The birds were shy that day, and after the first shot would not allow him to come within range. Selim joined him at noon, but even that energetic young man did not bring good luck, so they returned to camp early with very little to show for the day's work.

But youth bubbles with hopes and projects, and the spirits of the sportsmen were raised by a suggestion of Selim's—that if the Professor could spare them on the morrow, they would start early and have a long day at Crocodile Creek, as they had named it. They would get out the felucca and creep among the reeds, which teemed with wild duck. There were plenty of fish, too, and it would be hard lines if they did not bring back a surprising contribution to the larder. Selim had his own private plans about which he said nothing; he had set his mind on another mud-tortoise, and had a scheme to set a trap for the old crocodile.

With these thoughts in their minds they gaily approached the camp, and turning some bushes that sheltered it on one side they came to a very sudden halt. What was it that caused their eyes to start and their knees to tremble? From the open tent came the tall figure of a swarthy barbarian, clad in white and wearing the dark patches of the Mahdist uniform, a sword beneath his left arm, and a gigantic spear in his hand. This menacing figure took one step towards them across the burnt ashes of the camp fire and raised his spear. Selim turned and fled. All that the Sheikh had told

Dick rushed tumultuously through his mind, filling him with a terrible fear—a horrible vision of Harry and the Professor slaughtered within the tent made his cheek pale and his teeth rattle. He gripped the gun to raise it to his shoulder; but remembering that the cartridge was withdrawn, he seized it by the barrel and prepared to defend himself with the butt-end. The barbarian lowered his spear, and a smile spread over his features—it was the Sheikh. Dick gasped and relaxed the grip on the gun-barrel, saying faintly as the smiling Arab advanced to meet him:

'How you did frighten me! What have you done yourself up like that for?' And now the Professor's laughing face was seen beneath the flap of the tent, and Harry appeared, limping and chuckling; but Dick's feelings had been too deeply stirred to join in the laugh.

'You ought not to have scared me like that. You ought not to have done it, Sheikh.' There was an unmistakable tone of anger in Dick's voice. The Sheikh laid his hand kindly on Dick's shoulder and said: 'So it is, Dick; it was not well done. It is not good to cry "the wolf," but you stood firm. See you, I go away now to the far south. I go not like the Arab merchant, I go as the dervish warrior. Into the dervish camp I go: also into Khartoum, for there am I sent.'

They entered the tent, which bore evidences of the Sheikh's change of costume. His haik was neatly folded and laid aside, and a long bundle, a sort of hold-all, which contained all the Arab's luggage, lay open on the floor. This bundle had aroused the curiosity of the boys on board the *Isis*.

'Fishing-rods,' suggested Harry, but Dick had laughed him to scorn.

'Fancy an Arab Sheikh with a bundle of fishing-rods—going a-fishing in the Sahara Desert, I suppose,' and Dick had chuckled immoderately. Selim was in the habit of thinking with his fingers, so having felt sharp points at one end of the bundle had pronounced the contents to be spears and guns. It was now seen that he was right as regards the former, but there were no guns. Two spears full seven feet long with broad leaf-shaped heads and some shorter throwing spears.

Dick looked the Sheikh up and down curiously. It was wonderful how his appearance was altered. His beard was shaven, leaving a small moustache, and his strong neck was bare to the shoulder. His haik removed, he stood in his loose white under-garment, now decorated with the dark patches worn by the soldiers of the Khalifa—two down the front and one on each arm, and beneath this garment showed baggy white breeches, bare ankles, and shoes. Suspended by a strap over his shoulder a long straight sword hung close up under the left arm.

'Well, I never,' Dick summed up. 'Quite a quick-change artist, but he did give me a fright,' and Dick's brow clouded at the recollection of the few moments of anguish that the Arab had caused him, and which he had not quite forgiven.

The Sheikh was ready to depart: he shook hands with them in English fashion and gathered up his spears. They walked with him in the waning light to the edge of the oasis, and watched his figure diminishing to a speck on the sands of the desert, his face to the unknown south, then turned in silence back to the tent. The camp seemed quite lonesome: the boys felt that they had lost a friend. His last words, spoken aside to Dick, were 'Good-bye, English boy Dick. Forget not the voice of the oracle: forget it not.'

It was not till supper was in progress that Selim crept cautiously into camp and was greeted with derisive laughter. His shamefaced manner quickly disappeared and he joined in the laughter at his own expense and was soon discoursing fluently about the adventures of some very nice boy he had once known—a boy possessed of remarkable courage—who was once, but only once, curiously surprised into a fit of panic.

(Continued on page 190.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

6.—TWO SINGLE ACROSTICS.

I.

A Christian name borne by a great religious leader, and also by a powerful emperor.

1. The author of well-known works on the evidences of religion.
2. An American philosophical writer.
3. A celebrated English novelist.
4. The keeper of a valuable diary.
5. An influential writer on art and social subjects.

II.

A Christian name borne by an unhappy duke and three British poets.

1. A beautiful flower.
2. A fragrant fruit.
3. A nourishing food.
4. A wriggling fish.
5. An unpleasant animal.
6. A popular game.

C. J. B.

(Answers on page 211.)

ANSWER TO CHARADE ON PAGE 147.

Kingfisher.

DIED LEARNING.

IN the cemetery at Mentone is a grave, on the headstone of which are the following words:—

‘Here lies

JOHN RICHARD GREEN,
Historian of the English people.
He died learning.’

May not old as well as young take this simple epitaph to heart? Life is indeed a school-time, and we should all be learning.

THE TWO SINGERS.

A NIGHTINGALE once, in the summer, you know,
Was singing a song to the moon:
While a frog on the bank of the river below
Was croaking a different tune.
And the bird thought, ‘How very much better ‘twould be
If he’d shut up his mouth and just listen to me.’

While froggy was thinking, ‘The chap overhead
My musical ear seems to vex
With his ‘jug-jug-jug-jugging.’ Why can’t he, instead,
Like me, sing, ‘breck-reckitty-quex?’
But as long, I suppose, as the sound he enjoys,
He cares not an atom whom else he annoys.’

THE BOY WHO LOVED BOOKS.

ONCE upon a time, there was a little boy named John, who lived with his grandmother because his father was a drunkard, and his mother was very poor and hard-worked. His grandmother, also, was poor, but she loved her little grandson dearly, and he was exceedingly fond of her. Their home was at Plymouth. The two often went out together to gather flowers, or, in the nutting season, nuts. Sometimes, too, they would go to the beach, and the grandmother always carried in her pocket a stock of dainties—ginger-bread, apples, plums, or sweets—for her beloved boy.

John did not go to school until he was nearly eight years of age. Schooling in those days had to be paid for, and poor Johnny could only go when his father managed to save a little money from the ale-house, which was seldom. The child was very fond of books; his grannie thought him a wonder, and told everybody that he was ‘the best scholar in Plymouth.’ John himself knew better; but he really *was* a wonder, considering how few his opportunities had been.

If his good old grandmother could not pay for his education at school, she at least taught him what she could at home. Probably she herself was unable to read, but she taught the boy to *sew*. He did the greater part of a ‘gay patchwork’ for her bed, and made—to use his own words—‘quilts and kettle-holders enough for two generations.’ The old lady told him delightful stories; so also did a kind shoemaker named Roberts. And whenever John had a penny to spare, which you may be sure was not often, he would spend it on a picture-book or a nursery rhyme.

Then, one day, Johnny actually wrote a story himself.

He has told us the story of this first effort. ‘My cousin,’ he says, ‘came one day with a penny in his hand, declaring his intention to buy a book with it. I was just then sadly in want of a penny to make up fourpence, with which to purchase the *History of King Pippin*; so I inquired whether he bought a book for the pictures or the story. ‘The story, to be sure!’ he said. I then said that, in that case, I would, for his penny, write him both a larger and a better story than he could get in print for the same sum; and that he might be still further a gainer, I would paint him a picture at the beginning, and he knew there were no painted pictures in penny books. He expressed the satisfaction he should feel in my doing so, and sat down quietly on the stool to note my operations. When I had done, I certainly thought my cousin’s penny pretty well earned; and as, at reading the paper and viewing the picture, he was of the same opinion, no one else had any right to complain of the bargain. I believe this was the first penny I ever earned.’

John’s next work was a drama to be performed by children. The terms of admission to the performance were: ‘Ladies eight pins, and gentlemen ten.’

Sad times, however, were in store for the poor boy. He had to leave his grandmother, who, stricken by paralysis, could no longer keep him. He was apprenticed to a barber, who falsely accused him of theft, and discharged him. After that, John could do nothing but try to help his father with his work. One day, while thus employed, he had a terrible fall of thirty-five feet. For more than a week he lay insensible, and did not quit his bed for four months. When he recovered

consciousness, he found that he was *deaf*, and although at a later period of his life he submitted to many surgical operations, he never recovered his hearing. He endured much misery, until at last he was taken into the workhouse. Yet this deaf pauper lad, by dint of diligence and perseverance, eventually triumphed over all difficulties. He wrote many books, and became a Doctor of Divinity and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries. So the letters 'D.D.' and 'F.S.A.' were placed after his name—which was John Kitto.

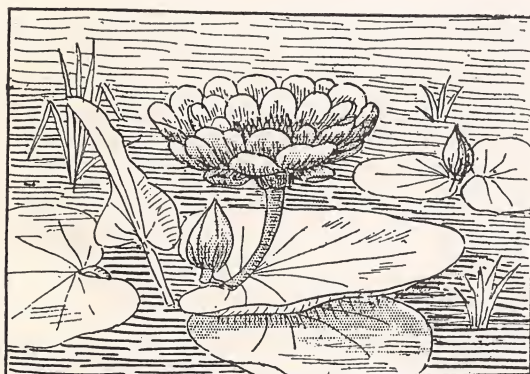
E. DYKE.

THE FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

VI.—THE LOTUS OF EGYPT.

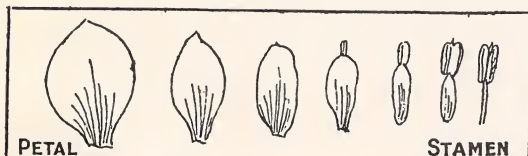
THE Lotus of Egypt is a very ancient emblem. I think I am safe in saying that of all flowers it is the one of which we have the earliest records. The ancient Egyptians held this flower sacred, and dedicated it to their gods, especially to the goddess Isis; and as they held it in such great reverence, it was natural that they should use it constantly in the decoration of their temples, and in many other ways, thinking that the sight of its representations would remind the people of their religious beliefs.

Now the lotus of Egypt is a water lily; in fact it is practically our white water lily, whose proper name is



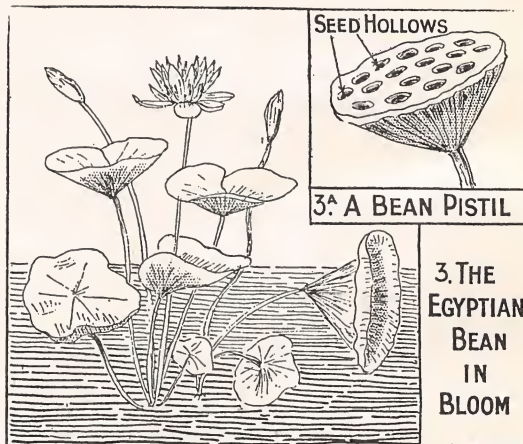
1. PLANT OF THE WHITE WATER LILY

Nymphaea Alba ('white nymph,' in reference to its home in the water). In Lower Egypt it covers wide stretches of the Nile, and many rivulet tributaries where the water is slow-running or even stagnant. It appears when the river goes down after the rains, and is looked upon as a promise of plenty, as it comes before the rice and other crops.

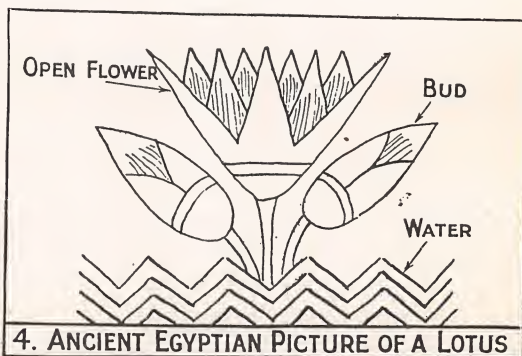


2. HOW LOTUS PETALS CHANGE INTO STAMENS

The leaves lie on the surface of the water, and the flowers rise somewhat above and then open (fig. 1). These flowers are often eight or ten inches across when open, and are pure white. In the middle is a pistil very like that of a poppy, surrounded by numerous stamens with bright yellow anthers. A curious feature



about the white water lily is that there is no distinct division between sepals, petals, and stamens. Most flowers have a definite number of perfect sepals and petals, and then within are a definite number of perfect stamens; but in the case of the white water lily, the sepals are a bronze-green outside but white within, are not fixed in number, but just the outer layer of petals with green backs. Then within are rows of perfect petals, which gradually are seen to be smaller as they approach the middle, and at last anthers appear



4. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PICTURE OF A LOTUS

on the tips of the petals; finally, the petal is a stamen-stem or filament. (Fig. 2 shows the stages of change.)

This is all very curious and interesting, and I hope you will try to get hold of a white water lily to identify what I tell you. This gradual change of the parts of a flower is supposed by many botanists to prove that all flowers were once *leaves*!

Another curious fact about the white water lily is that it closes up at night, or in cold or wet weather, and *sinks*. This is very beautifully described by the

poet Tennyson in one of his poems, where he says the water lily

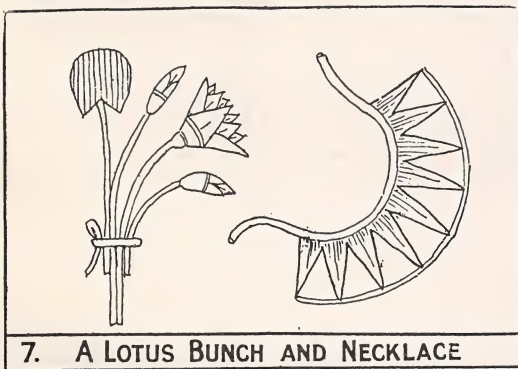
'Folds all her sweetness up
And slips into the bosom of the lake.'

Then there are the pink and the blue lotus, which grow in different parts of Egypt, and were quite probably known in early times, for the ancient Egyptians were keen gardeners. There are also other plants which are sometimes confused with this; there is one which is probably the Egyptian bean. It has large white flowers almost exactly like those of the *Nymphaea Alba*, but they rise often two or three feet above the



5. GUEST SMELLING A LOTUS 6. EGYPTIAN LADY WEARING LOTUS

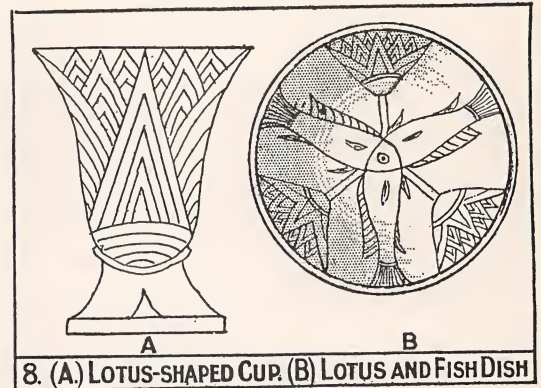
surface of the water, and the leaves also. Fig. 3 gives you an idea of this plant. Its pistil is curious; I show one at A. A book I read the other day described it as like the rose of a watering-can, and really the likeness is excellent. You see the seeds are buried in little pits. All parts of this plant are eaten, as are also the roots of the *Nymphaea Alba*. The old method of sowing the nelumbium, or Egyptian bean, interests me much; the natives used to wrap the seeds in lumps of



7. A LOTUS BUNCH AND NECKLACE

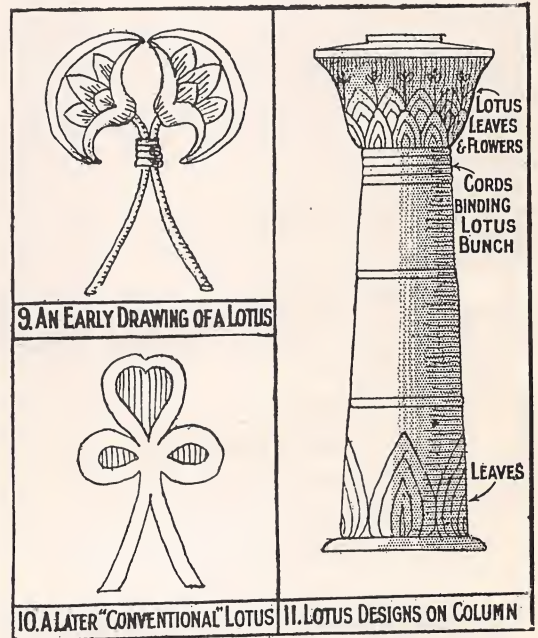
clay, and throw them into the water where they wished them to grow.

There are several legends concerning the lotus. One is that *Nymphaea* was a very beautiful nymph, who was deserted by her lover, and in her unhappiness she fell into a river and was drowned. These beautiful flowers are supposed to have sprung up where she fell. Another legend, I think of Greek origin, was that



when a beautiful nymph was awakened by a kiss from Apollo, the sun-god, she changed herself into a white water lily.

Now you know the Egyptians adopted a wonderfully enduring method of recording their history. They carved their events (pictures of them) on the walls of their buildings, temples, tombs, and so on, and it is



from these that we gather much of our knowledge of the popularity of the lotus. Fig. 4 is a typical representation of a lotus growing. The lotus was very largely used at all feasts, festivals, and entertainments of all kinds. As guests arrived they were each presented with a lotus, which they carried in their hands. Fig. 5 shows you a guest with a lotus. Of course the Egyptian figures seem very strange and unnatural to us, but to study them (as you can, for instance, at the British Museum) is very interesting, and you can learn

many very extraordinary facts about life in Egypt from a careful examination of Egyptian carvings and paintings.

In the British Museum there is a wall-decoration from Thebes, thousands of years old, which represents a party of guests being supplied by servants with lotus garlands and necklaces; they are all holding one, or a bunch, and many of the ladies have them in their hair. Fig. 6 shows a lady with a lotus in her hair. At feasts constant supplies of lotus were brought to the guests, so that they never need have faded flowers. Fig. 7 shows you a typical bunch and a necklace as shown in this wall-decoration from Thebes.

The Egyptians also decorated their household utensils with lotus. Fig. 8 shows you a drinking-cup in the shape of one, and a dish decorated with lotus and fishes. Then, as no doubt you know, Egyptian writing consisted of a series of sketches, words being represented by little sketches. Our 'Cleopatra's Needle,' on the Thames Embankment, is covered with these hieroglyphics, as they are called. The lotus was the sign representing the lower part of Egypt. Fig. 9 shows a drawing of it made about B.C. 3759-3730; this same sign became very poor as years passed, and can hardly be recognised, as seen in fig. 10.

Now I think I have shown you enough to make you realise the national and ancient character of the lotus. I hope you will look out for it whenever you have the opportunity of seeing any Egyptian carving or painting, for it is sure to come in somewhere. In pictures of temples you will see columns carved to represent bundles of lotus (fig. 11). In picture of festivals in honour of their gods, you will find tables piled up with lotus which has been brought as offerings to these gods. Of course, as I said before, the figures are all very stiff and angular, but you must remember that many of the sketches are from carvings, the outlines of which were little channels (sometimes inches deep) cut into the hard granite and then filled in with some kind of composition which was coloured or black. Also many were very large, much larger than life-size, and their tools must have been rough, so that we can only look and wonder and pay a tribute of respect to these great artists of thousands of years ago.

E. M. BARLOW.

THE ROAD.

LIKE ribbons of dazzling silver,
The wet roads unfold:
They quit the red-roofed houses
For field and furrow and wold.

And one climbs to a Palace,
Upon a hill so high
That its tapering spires and turrets
Appear to prick the sky.

And one is lost within a wood
Of oak and beech and elm:
Through leafy aisles it leads at last
To an enchanted realm.

But the road that I would follow
Runs down to the dreaming sea.
Where the white sails that gleam and glide
Are for ever calling me!

R. B. INCE.

AN EAR-TRUMPET ASTRAY.

'IT'S been the longest week I ever remember,' announced Hope, as she shovelled an armful of books into an already over-crammed cupboard. 'If we had to keep it up for another two days I think I should burst.'

Lance, lolling idly across the schoolroom table, seemed unimpressed by this statement, and continued to scan the open book before him with lazily disbelieving 'Not a single bad-conduct mark for any of us since last Saturday,' he said, running his finger along the neat line of figures in Mademoiselle's cramped hand. 'We certainly do deserve a jolly good reward to-morrow. I wish Uncle Peter had told us what it was going to be.'

'There's still this afternoon,' answered Hope, cautiously. 'Don't forget that if one of us gets a bad mark to-day, we all lose the treat to-morrow.'

Lance relapsed into silence over the thought of this depressing truth, until a sound of flying footsteps in the passage made both children look eagerly towards the door.

A moment later it burst unceremoniously open, and Monica, flushed of face and dishevelled of appearance, stood panting on the threshold. 'Hope! Lance! We're absolutely done!' she exclaimed, tragically. 'The very worst thing has happened! Miss Sinclair's come for the afternoon!'

A bomb through the ceiling on to the schoolroom table could scarcely have brought expressions of more complete horror into the faces of the two listeners; and in the pause that followed Monica's announcement they stared at each other in a silence of sheer dismay.

It was Lance who first recovered his power of speech. 'She can't have!' he exclaimed, as though to gain courage from his own contradiction.

'Very well, go and see for yourself in the hall if you don't believe me,' replied Monica in a superior voice.

'In the hall?' repeated Hope.

'Yes, on the chair. Her ear-trumpet, I mean, not her. She's shut up with Mother in the drawing-room. I heard them talking.'

With an expression of utter despair Lance glanced upwards at the clock. 'In two hours we shall be sent for,' he said, dismally. 'Then there will be an hour of answering questions down the ear-trumpet, and it's perfectly impossible that we shall all three get through the afternoon without making a mess of it somehow. So that's the end of Uncle Peter's treat.'

'No, it isn't!' cried Monica. She had risen with sudden determination from her chair, and as she looked from one to the other her eyes shone with suppressed excitement. 'We *won't* have to answer any questions! I have thought of a plan. Don't you see? She can't hear a word without her ear-trumpet, and when she goes to look for it in the hall it won't be there!'

Hardly waiting to watch the effect of her words on the two bewildered faces before her, she turned suddenly to the door, and a moment later her retreating footsteps could be heard speeding along the passage.

'She's going to hide it somewhere!' exclaimed Hope in an awed voice.

Lance nodded, and his eyes shone. 'So there's only our clothes now to pass,' he said, hopefully. 'Do you think if I wet my hair it will lie flat enough?'

Hope did not answer. She had crossed to the open window, and as she leaned out into the sunshine her attention was caught by something small and black that suddenly whirled from the direction of the garden door, and fell to the ground behind a clump of laurels on the lawn. Then she withdrew her head. 'We're saved!' she cried, triumphantly. 'Now for the pumice-stone, and I will get the ink off my fingers!'

When Uncle Peter found his way along the school-room passage ten minutes later, the half-open bathroom door disclosed a scene of some confusion. Lance, in his shirt-sleeves, was leaning over the bath, vigorously applying a nail-brush to his fingers, while Monica, with a red, agitated countenance, wrestled with the stud at the back of his collar. In the foreground Hope dabbed perseveringly at her hair with a wet brush, in the vain endeavour to subdue the mass of curls to something like tidiness.

'Hullo!' cried Uncle Peter from the doorway, and in an instant there was a confused stampede towards him, questions raining in shrill voices from every mouth, as three pairs of hands dragged him into the room, and pressed him to the seat of honour on the edge of the bath.

'Do tell us about the treat, quick!' pleaded Monica, when she could make her voice heard above the tumult.

'We haven't lost any marks yet,' piped in Lance.

'So I have just heard from Mademoiselle,' replied Uncle Peter. 'Now, if you'll all sit quite still and not interrupt me, I'll tell you about the reward. Well, I have a very old friend called Mr. Bellfield, who lives right away in the country in a lovely house with a big garden all round it. In the garden there is a lake full of fish, and there is a boat on the lake, and an island in the middle. Now, what do you all say to spending the day there to-morrow, driving down very early before breakfast in my motor, fishing all day from the boat, and having a picnic on the island for tea?'

The expressions of ecstasy on the faces before him left no doubt as to the children's approval of the plan. Monica's eyes shone as she tried to put her gratitude into words, and Lance capered about the passage in such high spirits that Uncle Peter had to seize him by the shoulders before he could be made to realise that there was more to be explained.

'You have more to hear yet,' he said, as he re-seated himself on the edge of the bath, and reviewed the trio squatted tailor-wise on the floor before him. 'My old friend Mr. Bellfield's been hearing all about this week of good marks, and, as he is really giving you the treat to-morrow, he asked if he might come with me this afternoon to hear what account you all had to give of yourselves. So I want you to come down now and talk to him, and he shall decide whether you deserve the reward or not. Remember he is very old, and very deaf. You will have to speak as distinctly as you can down his ear-trumpet.'

A silence followed—a silence so intense that Monica vaguely wondered whether it was because her heart had stopped beating; and when Uncle Peter's voice broke the strain it seemed to come from very far away. 'Well, you had better all finish your dressing operations,' he said, as he rose to go. 'Mr. Bellfield has to leave before four, so hurry up, and come down as soon as you can.'

The door closed behind him, and Lance's voice, in a stage whisper, broke the silence. 'Where did it go?'

Hope was tying back her hair in a fever of impatience. 'I know; I saw it,' she said hurriedly. 'I'm just ready. I will fetch it now.'

Five minutes later Monica and Lance were making their way down the broad front staircase, their hearts beating unevenly as they heard Uncle Peter's voice greeting them from the hall below.

'Here, come and look for Mr. Bellfield's ear-trumpet you two. He brought it with him, and it has disappeared, and he can't hear what you've got to tell him unless you find it.'

A guilty-looking, dishevelled little figure was making her way across the hall from the garden door, and at the foot of the staircase the three met.

'It's gone,' whispered Hope, as her eyes looked despairingly into Monica's. 'I've hunted all through the laurels, and there is not a sign of it.'

None of the children ever forgot the minutes that followed, when with scarlet faces and unseeing eyes they crawled about the polished floor of the hall, searching under chairs and tables, and exchanging guilty glances when each fresh suggestion from their uncle proved fruitless. Perhaps it was almost worse when the search was given up, and old Mr. Bellfield patted the undeserving backs, and thanked the children for all the trouble they had taken. Lance shuffled his feet uncomfortably, and Monica turned away to hide her crimson cheeks, staring abstractedly at Carlo, who was walking gingerly across the slippery floor.

Then she gave a little cry: 'Uncle Peter! It's here! Carlo's got it! Drop it, Carlo—drop it!' And a moment later the ear-trumpet lay on the floor at her feet.

'Bad dog!' said Mrs. Beresford severely from the drawing-room door. 'I've never known him take anything out of the house like that before. He must be punished at once. Get his whip, Lance.'

Lance did not move. His eyes were on Monica's face, and he stepped a pace backwards as she walked suddenly to Mr. Bellfield's side, and put her mouth to the ear-trumpet. 'It isn't Carlo's fault. I threw it out of the window,' she said in a clear, distinct voice, and then she turned round, and facing the astonished audience poured out the whole story of the afternoon's adventure.

Mr. Bellfield was leaning towards her, and every sound must have penetrated through the ear-trumpet, as his voice was the first to break the silence that followed the conclusion of the recital. 'Did you know that telling me this would lose you the treat to-morrow?' he asked.

Monica turned her unflinching brown eyes to the old man's face. 'Yes, of course. I didn't want to tell because it seemed such hard luck on Hope and Lance. It was all my fault, and I deserve the punishment, but they don't, and I know they mind awfully. But I couldn't let Carlo be thrashed.'

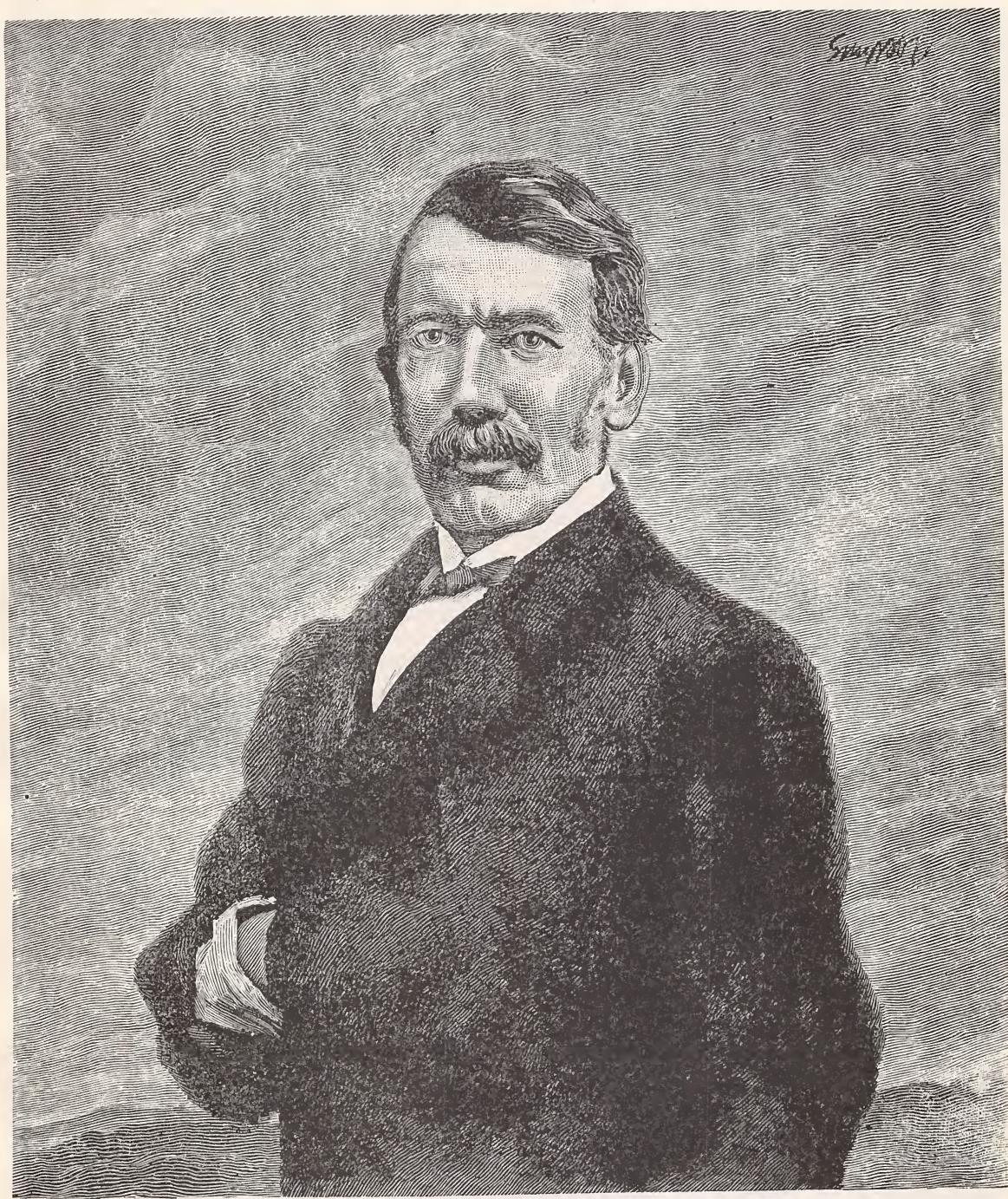
Mr. Bellfield cleared his throat, and his eyes were a little misty as he looked towards Uncle Peter. 'I don't know what you say, Peter,' he began, 'but I think that by owning up her wrong-doing she has paid the penalty of it.'

Uncle Peter took a step forward, and three pairs of eyes were glued to his face as he lowered it to the ear-trumpet.

'We will all be with you at nine o'clock to-morrow,' he said.



"The ear-trumpet lay on the floor at her feet."



David Livingstone. From a painting by Joseph Simpson.

HEROES OF OTHER DAYS.

I.—DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

(Concluded from page 174.)

IN his first explorations of the Upper Zambezi, all Livingstone thought about was to get out of this vast region of swamps (where the life even of the natives was made wretched by malarial fever) into some healthy district where he could found his great missionary settlement for the evangelisation of Central Africa. But this plan gradually expanded into a resolve to lay bare the geographical features of Zambezia. Having travelled up the Zambezi almost to its actual source, aided in this by a faithful following of Makololo, he next pushed on with them across the Upper Kasai River, which is in the Congo basin, and then to the Kwango, and finally to the Portuguese province of Angola, reaching its capital, Loanda, on May 31st, 1854. Several times on the way he nearly perished from fever or dysentery, or narrowly escaped being killed by suspicious or hostile natives.

His arrival at the large and civilised town of Loanda was a great event. He was certainly the first white man who had ever crossed this section of South-central Africa, and the Portuguese showed him the kindest hospitality. Fitted out once more at their expense, he regained the Upper Zambezi with his faithful Makololo, and then followed that river as nearly as possible all the way down to its delta. A British war vessel picked him up and conveyed him to Mauritius, from which island he made his way back to England overland, having achieved a lasting fame.

From England, however, he returned to East Africa in 1858 at the head of a well-equipped expedition sent out by the British Government to explore the regions of the Zambezi, and ascertain how far they were suited for cotton cultivation and for commerce generally. In the course of this expedition he and his companions discovered Lake Nyasa, hitherto only known by vague reports of Portuguese travellers who had caught glimpses of its southern end. From Lake Nyasa, before he returned to England in 1864, he had made a journey westwards on which he had collected information about other great lakes still farther to the west and north, and of a mighty river that flowed from them northwards—a river which he believed must be the Upper Nile. With great difficulty he raised funds through the Royal Geographical Society and out of the sale of his own books, and equipped a third expedition to Central Africa, which left England in 1866. On this occasion he travelled alone, taking no other white man with him. Once more he reached Lake Nyasa, on the east coast, walked round its southern extremity, and then started off to the north-west. In this way he discovered the south end of Tanganyika, and then in succession Lake Mweru and Lake Bangweulu and the mighty Upper Congo, or Luapula. This river, under the name of Lualaba, he traced northwards to about the fourth degree of south latitude, firmly believing it to be the Nile.

Want of supplies obliged him to return to seek for them at Ujiji, and the north-east coast of Tanganyika; and here, when in the last extremity of weakness, and with the sick sadness of feeling that he was forgotten and abandoned by his fellow-countrymen, he met Henry Morton Stanley, a newspaper correspondent, who had

been sent out with a relief expedition by the proprietor of a great American newspaper. Stanley and Livingstone together explored the north end of Tanganyika and the country of Uyamwezi. Then, bidding good-bye to Stanley, with his new caravan of porters and the ample stores that Stanley had brought him, Livingstone obstinately made his way back to the sources, not of the Nile, as he believed, but of the Congo. He determined to commence with Lake Bangweulu as being the southernmost reservoir of this great river, and then travel down-stream along the Lualaba until it should become either the Nile flowing out of the Albert Nyanza, or the Congo. But he got no farther than the south end of Lake Bangweulu, and died there from exhaustion on May 1st, 1873, sixty years old.

On all these wonderful journeys, with their immense additions to our knowledge of African geography, he never lost sight of his main objective, which was to do good to the untaught native races of Africa. When he reached Tanganyika and entered the eastern basin of the Congo, he realised the full horror of the Arab slave trade, which he saw at its worst. He therefore attempted from the heart of Africa to arouse the conscience of the world to put an end to this reign of cruelty and violence. The effect of his appeal, followed as it was soon afterwards by his death, was tremendous. It led to an immense development of missionary energy. Six years after he was buried in Westminster Abbey there were great missionary settlements in Uganda and many other parts of East and Central Africa, on the Lower Congo, and on Lake Nyasa. Twenty-five years after his death British and German protectorates had been founded to cover all that part of Central and South-central Africa which was not already claimed by the Portuguese or the French. Stanley, Grenfell, and their successors had made known the whole of the Congo basin, and had organized it into a state which, if at first cruel and selfish in its procedure, ultimately made conditions of life for the black people in the heart of Africa infinitely better than they were either under the Arabs or farther back still, when ferocious cannibal tribes warred incessantly one against the other. The whole of Bechuanaland is now a civilised, temperate country, wisely ruled by its own chiefs. The name of Livingstone justly stands out as first amongst the great explorers of Africa in the nineteenth century, not only because of his many remarkable discoveries, but on account of his unselfish devotion to the cause and interests of the native African peoples.

SIR H. JOHNSTON.

THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

‘IT’S no good! Counting up everything, it only comes to five shillings; and Cook says we can’t possibly get a turkey for less than seven-and-six.’

Eva raised a disappointed face from the piece of paper covered with sprawling figures, and her little sister looked down questioningly from her perch on the window-seat.

‘Rosemary!—is it you? I thought it was Kenneth.’

‘He went downstairs long ago. You were doing sums so hard, you didn’t notice. What do you mean about the turkey, Eva?’

‘We weren’t going to tell you,’ said Eva, doubtfully; ‘but it can’t matter now, as it isn’t going to happen. It

began to come into my head the day before we came away from home, when you and Kenneth were talking about Christmas.'

'What did?' asked Rosemary.

'The idea, of course. Mother was listening to you, and when Kenneth said something about the turkey and plum-pudding, she suddenly held my hand so tight and told me that Father couldn't afford a turkey this year. I don't know why she minded so much; but she looked as if she was going to cry.'

'And what idea did you think of?' Rosemary's eyes were wide with sympathetic interest as she leaned forward and watched her sister intently.

'To buy a turkey as a surprise. Kenneth said he'd sell the guinea-pigs and I have sixpence in my money-box—and then there are the rabbits. The Burke boys said they'd buy "Jackanapes" for half-a-crown—and your "Susan," too,' she added slowly, after a moment's thought.

Rosemary's hands tightened their hold on the window-ledge, and a sudden fear came into the large grey eyes.

'How much does it come to, added up?' she asked, in a low voice.

'About five shillings—half-a-crown too little.'

The pause that followed was broken at last by the boisterous entry of Kenneth.

'We're going home to-morrow, instead of Wednesday,' he shouted, gaily. 'Aunt Alice has just told me. Isn't it going to be a ripping week?—first, going home; then, Christmas three days after!'

'Ripping!' echoed Eva; but the smile died away from her face as she caught sight of the paper before her.

And Rosemary, in the window-seat, said nothing; but a hundred ideas whirled through her mind as she pressed her face against the leaded pane and stared out into the darkness. Half-a-crown more, and the turkey could be bought for Mother; and it was only she who could make the sacrifice that would bring that half-crown to add to the five shillings. Her thoughts flew to the wooden hutch that hung on the wall of the potting-shed at home, the front of wire netting through which the soft nose of 'Susan' would poke in joyous welcome at the sound of her mistress's voice. For so many days she had looked forward to seeing her pet again; and now, if she agreed to make the sacrifice it would be only to say good-bye, and the hutch in the potting-shed would be empty, and the blank in her life so big!

There were tears in the grey eyes as she turned her back on the window, and watched Eva and Kenneth's heads bent over the paper again.

'I might get Jenkins to give me half-a-crown for the guinea-pigs,' Kenneth was saying, hopefully. 'That would bring it to five-and-six.'

Rosemary turned sorrowfully away. She knew that to Eva and Kenneth the sacrifice of their pets meant so little compared with the loss it would be for her. They would not for the world have owned that they were tired of the animals; but on more than one occasion lately the guinea-pigs' feeding-time had been forgotten and 'Jackanapes' would have fared badly for the luxurious morsels that he loved had it not been for Rosemary's attentions to him and a share of 'Susan's' dainties.

But to the little girl the possession of the rabbit was dearer than anything else, and only she herself knew how bitter was the struggle in her mind before the

decision was made. She could not bring herself to speak until she heard Eva push back her chair and move towards the door.

Then she slid resolutely to the floor.

'I have been thinking—"Susan" will be awfully lonely when "Jackanapes" has gone,' she said quickly. 'Tommy Burke told me he'd like to buy her for half-a-crown; so they'd better go together.'

Eva came to a sudden standstill and her eyes shone with excitement.

'Seven-and-six!' she exclaimed, in a bewilderment of joy. 'Rosemary—you *darling*! Oh, won't Mother be surprised!'

It was late on the following evening when the trio reached home, so that not until after breakfast on Wednesday morning were any preparations made for the departure of the animals.

Eva and Rosemary were watching the whirling snow from the schoolroom window when Kenneth darted in, clapping a hamper in his arms, and shedding straw wildly in every direction.

'Jenkins has given it me for the guinea-pigs,' he said triumphantly, as he dumped it down on the table. '"Jackanapes" and "Susan" must go in a hat-box.'

'You'll give them some straw, too?' put in Rosemary, anxiously.

'Heaps! I wish you'd go and fetch them now, Rosemary: I want Eva to help me catch the guinea-pigs.'

Five minutes later Rosemary was at the potting-shed door, hesitating pitifully as she stood with her hand on the latch.

Then her lips set firmly. She had made up her mind to be brave, and pushing open the door she stepped resolutely over the threshold.

"Susan!" she called softly; and then, as no answer came, she repeated the name more loudly.

Still there was no sign of the soft white head in the doorway, no shining pink eyes to respond in silent welcome to her voice; and a cold fear came over the little girl as she pushed back the bolt of the sleeping-box door.

Suddenly a little cry broke from her lips, and for a moment she stood quite still, staring into the hutch with wide, excited eyes. Then the eager hands were stretched out in welcome; for 'Susan' had jumped over the straw towards her, leaving the tiny, warm nest in the background, where four fluffy heads nestled cosily together.

Her rabbit-heart must have been sorely wounded when, after a hasty caress, the door was shut in her face, and pricking up her long, silky ears, she heard Rosemary's footsteps die away in the distance.

The white nose sniffed at the walls of the hutch in the darkness, and then, as no sound broke the silence outside, 'Susan' turned her attention to the corner where eight bright eyes were watching for her. Altogether, it was very unusual and disappointing, she decided—especially as she had been so anxious to show off the new family of which she was so proud.

Rosemary meanwhile was racing blindly up the garden-path, with only one thought in her mind: now the baby-rabbits could be sold to Tommy Burke, and she need not part with her beloved 'Susan,' after all!

Running breathlessly round a corner of the house, she suddenly collided with Kenneth, who was hurrying—hatless and coatless—through the snow.



"Kenneth darted in, clasping a hamper."

'Rosemary!' he exclaimed excitedly, 'a turkey has just come—by post from Uncle Alfred. We needn't sell the animals, after all. Isn't it ripping?'

For a moment the news seemed too good to be true, and Rosemary stared at her brother in half-dazed astonishment.

'Then I can keep the babies, too!' she gasped at

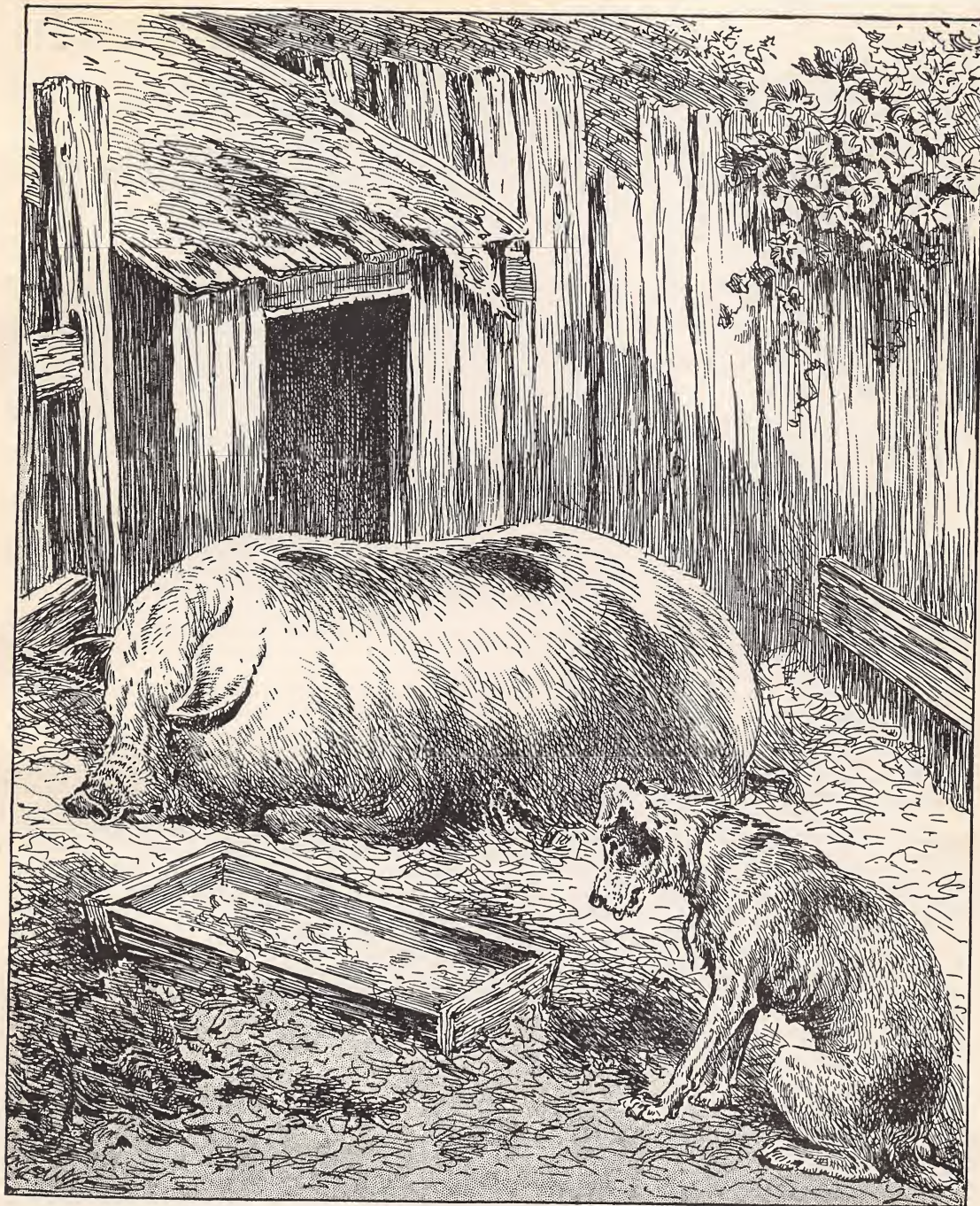
last. 'Oh, Kenneth, what a lovely Christmas we will have!'

'What *are* you talking about?' exclaimed Kenneth, in bewilderment, 'and where are you going?'

'Come with me, and you'll see!' cried Rosemary, joyously, and seizing her brother's hand in hers, she sped away down the path towards the potting-shed.



AT SCHOOL IN BURMA



“‘You are a greedy pig!’”

SELFISHNESS.

THE farmyard pig was dining—
He was greedy as could be;
Said Ponto, ‘I am hungry:
Can’t you spare a bit for me?’

‘That I should starve ‘midst plenty
Doesn’t seem exactly right.’
A grunt was Piggy’s answer,
He was not at all polite.

The dainties set before him
Were just suited to his mind;
For friendly conversation
He was not at all inclined.

He gobbled up his dinner,
Till he finished every scrap;
His banquet being ended,
He was ready for a nap.

Said Ponto, growing angry,
'Well, you *are* a greedy pig!
I may be lean and hungry,
But you do not care a fig.

'In all my life I've never
Seen such selfishness before!
The only sound in answer
Was the Piggy's gentle snore.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 179.)

CHAPTER XII.

THE expedition to Crocodile Creek had to be postponed, for the next day Uncle Charlie declared that they must now 'get to business.' He wished the boys to accompany him to a spot to the south-west of the oasis. Harry's foot was much better, and as it was but a short distance there was nothing to prevent his going. Selim was condemned to the kitchen and the larder: possibly he spent more time that day in the latter than in the former, but perhaps this is doing him an injustice, for since the lesson of the rat-trap, he showed signs of a struggle against his besetting sin, and in times of temptation, had there been any one near they might have seen him place a pebble, which he carried with him, in his mouth and commence sucking it with apparent relish and walk away resolutely from the zone of temptation.

Uncle Charlie came to a halt near a small mound of sand and rubbish and pointed to it with his stick.

'Boys,' he said, 'I want you to call to mind what I told you at Cairo about the history of our papyrus. Now,' he continued, 'this is the very spot where the papyrus was found,' and the Professor made an impressive pause.

The effect of the pause was spoilt by Dick. 'So you've found the place, then. I thought you said some one was coming to meet us here and show us the place—some one who found it, you said—a guide named—I forget his name.'

'Abdulla,' said the Professor, taking the interruption patiently, and swallowing what was to have been a very effective speech.

'Yes, Abdulla, that's it,' cried Dick. 'You said he was a guide or a scout or something, and that he worked out things for Colonel Swain and the Intelligence Department, that he found the papyrus and he'd be here and show us the spot.'

'Yes,' said the Professor turning on the boys with a smile, 'Abdulla has been here, and is gone.'

The boys looked at each other blankly and then at the Professor.

'The Sheikh,' stammered Dick; 'was that Abdulla?'

The Professor, still smiling, nodded his head. 'Well, I am —,' cried Dick, but could find no conclusion to his sentence.

This astonishing piece of information kept the boys silent some little time, they could not fit it in with their own conceptions.

'I'll tell you all about Abdulla this evening,' continued Uncle Charlie; 'you'll be interested now you know him. But now for the matter in hand: I want you to follow me very attentively. Let us sit down here—but don't sit on a snake.'

Seated on the low mound, with his hands on his knees and looking down at his boots, which were innocent of blacking and began to show signs of wear, Uncle Charlie began to speak slowly:

'Since we have been on the spot I have been much perplexed. I see the difficulties of the search more and more: and sometimes doubt if anything will come of it. It is true this wonderfully dry climate of Egypt has preserved to us so many of the monuments and treasures of the past—remains so perfect, after thousands of years, as to fill us with astonishment; but, on the other hand, much has fallen to the scythe of time, sometimes from reasons which we can but guess at. Difference of material accounts for something, and earthquakes, perhaps, but most of all the hand of man—incurious, revolutions, sieges—Persians, Greeks, and Turks—and often new towns and villages have been built from the materials of the old. For instance, the temple in the hill that we visited the other day. How is it that the protected interior is almost utterly destroyed, whilst the exposed face of it is nearly perfect? Well, now, to begin with the finding of the papyrus.

'As you have learned from the Sheikh—shall we still call him the Sheikh?—this oasis was much more extensive at one time; a small village stood here, and its people won a living from the soil; then the water diminished and the desert encroached. A year or two ago it was thought by one of the more enterprising inhabitants of that very village near which the *Isis* foundered, that something might be done with this place in the way of cultivation. He inspected it, and a little digging was done, but finally the thing fell through. Now, it was whilst this digging was in progress that the papyrus was found near the vestiges of an ancient well, and portions of a wall of some extent, on which we are now sitting.

'We guessed from the papyrus, you will remember, that it was thrown from the open chamber of a temple gateway in which the scribe was a prisoner—committed to the winds by him in the faint hope that it might fall into the hands of some one favourable to him or his party, who would aid him to escape. Now, into whose hands did it fall? Was it some one who carried it far from the place where it fell? Did it pass from hand to hand, and find its last resting-place at a great distance? If such was the case, the temple referred to in it, and the scribe's chamber, may be, for all we know, a hundred miles from this spot where it was found, and in that case our quest is hopeless. On the other hand, did it fall into the hands of some humble peasant, some tiller of the soil, in the neighbourhood of the temple, who from his circumstances would be no traveller, and so remain in the vicinity of the temple, till it was swept out with rubbish or became lost and buried in desert sand?

'Now, there are two reasons for entertaining the hope that the latter was the case. A careful examination

was made of the *débris* among which it was found—the remains of the well, the wall and other fragments of building material, and also of portions of a small wooden casket and broken pottery. These latter are in my possession and are fragments of crude domestic articles such as would be in the house of a peasant. Abdulla was on the spot when the articles were turned up, he has keen eyes, and according to him the well and wall and building material bespoke a dwelling of the humblest description.

‘The second reason is that at no great distance from the spot where the papyrus was found stands a temple, sure enough, and a temple is not to be found in every square mile of land in Upper Egypt I assure you: and this temple—the temple we have explored—answers the description of that in the papyrus in some most important particulars. It is in the desert with a desert outlook such as is described by the scribe; and added to this is another strong point which I will explain.

‘When Amenhotep IV.—the heretic, they call him—disseminated the new doctrine of Aten, which was, roughly speaking, the worship of one God whose manifestation was the sun—the giver of all light, life, and energy—he adopted the symbol of a solar disc pouring down its rays, each ray ending in a small hand, some of which were open and some holding the emblem of life—a ringed cross. In my examination of the temple a few days ago I found this emblem prominently displayed though now half obliterated, and also other evidence of its being a temple of Aten, and as such under the authority of Amenhotep and inimical to the god Ammon, and a likely place for the imprisonment of the scribe, who was a priest of Ammon. So this is where we now stand,’ said the Professor, summing up. ‘There is no proof, but a very strong possibility, that the temple we visited is the identical one in which Tahe, the beloved scribe, was imprisoned with his records and manuscripts.

‘I may mention, by the way, that there is another temple three miles to the south, which I shall explore if we fail here.

‘Do you quite understand the matter as far as I have gone?’ asked Uncle Charlie, and as the boys nodded assent the Professor continued:

‘We assume for working purposes that our temple is that of Tahe the scribe. Now for fresh difficulties. We gather from the papyrus that he had been a prisoner in the tower two years, in a chamber open in front to the day, and during that time had not seen the sun. What do we learn from that?’

After a pause, Harry ventured, ‘Why, the opening must have faced toward the North.’

‘Just so,’ said the Professor. ‘Now call to mind the situation of our temple,’ and he proceeded to draw a plan of the temple with his stick on the sand. ‘There have been four towers, three of which are standing. The gateway with its two pylons faces south, so the chamber cannot be in either of these towers. The back of these towers turns to the north, but the objection to this side as containing the chamber is that Tahe saw nothing from the opening but desert. Now, as you see from this plan, if the chamber opened from the back of one of these towers the scribe would have looked out over the courts and the entire body of the temple, and this does not tally with the papyrus. The chamber cannot be there; and of course the sides east and west would have received the rays of the sun, so it can be in

neither of those. So the chamber cannot be in either of the walls of the temple-gate as stated in the papyrus.’

The boys looked blank. The Professor continued:

‘Now, you see there are also two towers at the north end of the temple corresponding to the two of the gateway on the south. The outward walls of both the towers face north, commanding just such a view as the papyrus describes—a boundless stretch of desert, but there is no gateway, no opening at all, not even a small doorway, and the scribe expressly says a chamber in the wall of the gateway tower.’

The Professor paused: the boys looked blanker still.

‘Now, it occurred to me, as I thought the matter over yesterday, can it be that at one time there was a gateway at this end also—a thing not at all unlikely? So I propose that we walk over and make a careful examination of that end of the temple—it is still early in the day and we can get there before the heat gets oppressive. It is too far for Harry’s lame foot: I am afraid he must stay in camp with Selim, but I trust he won’t go hyæna-hunting again.’

Harry did not much relish the idea of being left behind, and Dick suggested the ‘ship of the desert’—Selim and he could draw it with ease and Harry could ride in state. Uncle Charlie saw no objection to this arrangement and proposed that Harry should bring his camera and take a photograph of the north end of the temple and examine it at leisure with the magnifying glass: said he, ‘Sometimes one can see things in photographs that one cannot see in the object itself.’

‘Yes,’ remarked Dick, with a sly look at the amateur photographer, ‘so I should think from some of the photos I’ve seen.’

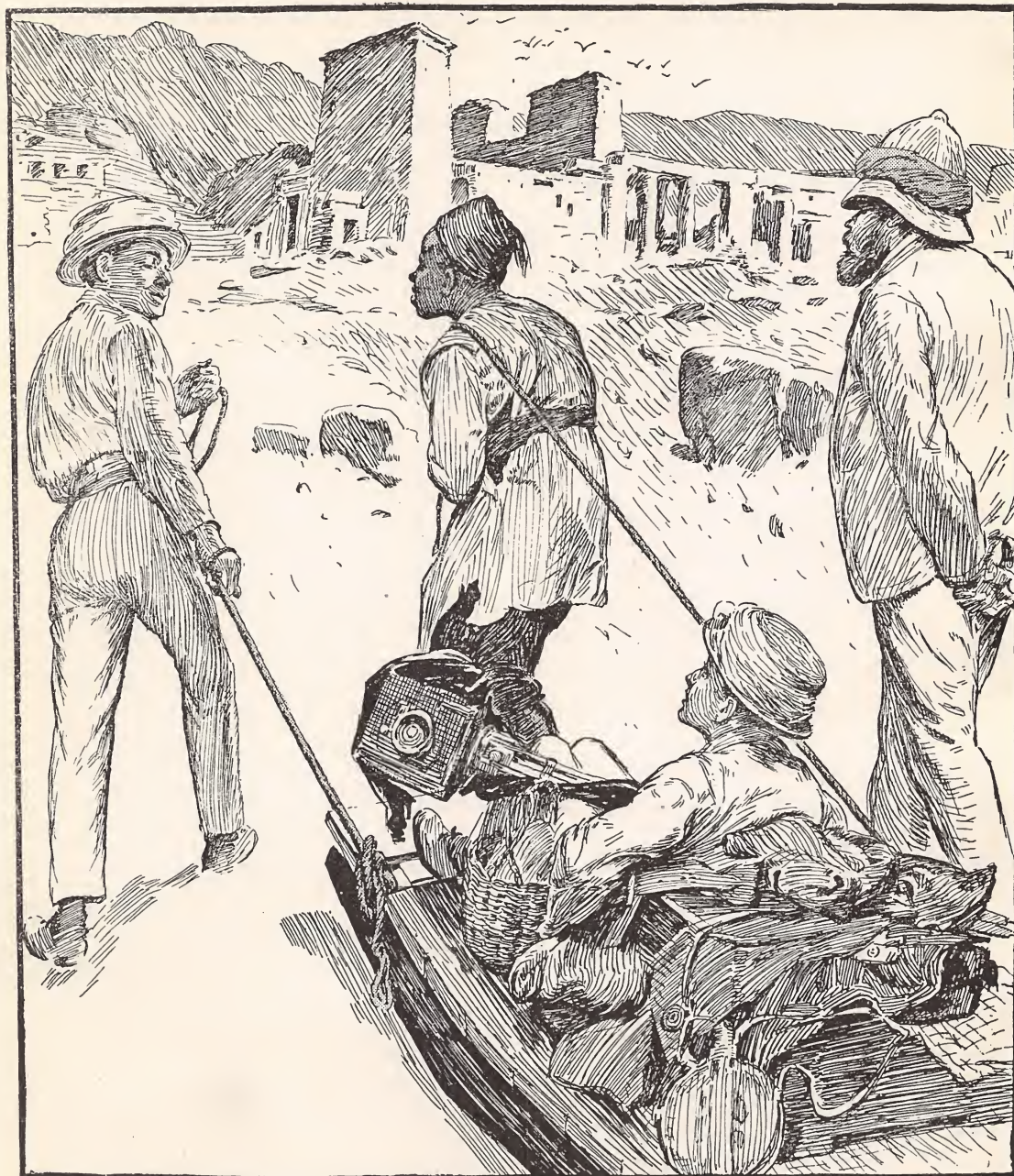
The ship of the desert was soon launched, provisioned, and her passenger on board, and was towed across the mile of sand that lay between the camp and the temple at a record pace.

The party stood beneath the northern towers and scanned their walls attentively. The two towers seemed to be exact counterparts of the southern ones, and were united to about half-way up in the same style, but there was no hint of a gateway having once existed. If there had been one in the past it had been built up so carefully as to leave no trace; as for any sign of an opening high up in the wall as described in the papyrus, even the willing imagination of the boys could not cheat them with the ghost of a hope. Uncle Charlie was more than a little disappointed, though he still held to the opinion that a gateway might have been there at some time.

They scrutinised the towers from within the court of the temple, and, as on the previous visit, entered the dungeon-like apartment which Harry had proposed to annex for photographic purposes, and where he now changed his plates, for, though it was brilliant sunshine without, here it was so intensely dark that he had no fear of fogging them. They wondered if there were steps by which the towers might be ascended from the inside, and spent some hours among the ruined columns of the corridor in the hopes of finding some passage of communication or method of ascent, but without success.

It was late when they returned to camp. It had been a very hot day with scarce any breeze and they had spent the hottest hours in the broiling sun. They were unusually tired and a little downhearted, and the Professor’s promised account of Abdulla was postponed to the next evening.

(Continued on page 194.)



“The ship of the desert was launched and towed across the sand.”



"The Professor paused and looked into the boys' eyes."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 191.)

CHAPTER XIII.

‘HERE! Selim, you rascal, don’t wash up those plates in cold water—they haven’t recovered from the mud-tortoise yet; and keep the lid on that condensed milk, the last was full of sand and ants.’

Uncle Charlie turned to the camp-fire and the two boys, and commenced his narrative

‘Abdulla was born in this district in a village not many miles from Assuan. He was a sharp boy, and grew up a keen, intelligent, trustworthy man, and though he spent many years in the Soudan, is perfectly loyal to the Egyptian Government, although he feels deeply its feebleness and inadequacy. More than that, he is a firm believer in the British occupation, and sees in its firmness and justice, and devotion to the welfare of the people, more especially the fellahen—those hard-working, long-suffering tillers of the soil, who are the backbone of Egypt—the only hope for the salvation of his country. He is perfectly familiar with the languages of the Soudan, and can without much difficulty mix with the people and pass as a native among any of the tribes. In 1884 and ’85, whilst quite a youngster of eighteen, he was employed as an interpreter in the British Expedition under Lord Wolseley. His knowledge of the black languages and natural sharpness soon brought him into notice, and he was trusted with difficult enterprises. Twice he made his way into the headquarters of the Dervishes without detection, which was no easy matter, and obtained useful information; and once he passed through their lines and entered Khartoum, and delivered dispatches from Lord Wolseley into the hands of General Gordon himself. As you know, the expedition did not reach Khartoum till it was too late. Khartoum fell, and with it Gordon. Abdulla was still in the capital when it fell, and passed through terrible scenes. What was left of the Egyptian garrison, to save their lives, joined the Mahdi, and with them Abdulla, until a favourable opportunity presented itself and he escaped. Since this he has been variously employed by the Government Intelligence Department.

‘You see, my boys,’ and Uncle Charlie paused to take breath and empty a tin mug of cold tea; he lit his pipe, promptly let it out again, and continued:

‘You see, my boys, Abdulla has been through many stirring experiences. He is still quite young—under thirty—although he looked much older with beard and haik as the Arab Sheikh—Obed-ben-Hesser.

‘Now you must know that when Khartoum fell into the hands of the Mahdi there were still a few Europeans in the Soudan: some perished and a few remained prisoners in the hands of the Dervishes. A little band of Italian missionaries, including two nuns, were spared, and as slaves suffered terrible things at the hands of their fanatical captors; for years they remained subjected to cruelty and degradation, and witnesses of the reign of terror that followed. For years—twelve or fourteen years—they remained thus. However, they were not forgotten at Cairo. You have heard of the escape of Slatin Pasha, one of the prisoners. There

were those among the British officers who were laying plans for the escape of these poor creatures, but of course nothing could be done openly. Native guides were employed by Major Wingate, and these, with the greatest secrecy, carrying their lives in their hands, penetrated the Soudan and were lost to the world for months. They were working underground, so to speak, at their perilous task; then some fine day it would be announced with rejoicing that a prisoner had escaped from the Khalifa’s clutches and was in Cairo. In this way three more escaped.

‘A guide, you must know, who had undertaken this mission once, could not be used again; he would have been detected with absolute certainty, and put to death. It is known that there is still another prisoner in the Soudan, and Abdulla is the guide employed to find him and effect his escape.’

The Professor paused and looked into the boys’ eyes—bright in the firelight and aglow from a fire within.

‘With the aid of Colonel Swain it was arranged that Abdulla should travel with us as an Arab merchant, and deviate a little from his course and point out to me the exact spot where the papyrus was found. When he left us he had a two days’ journey across the desert to join a small caravan of Arabs travelling south, and in a few days he will be among the Soudanese.’

Uncle Charlie lit his pipe again and looked thoughtfully into the fire, which was dying down to a white ash. A long silence was broken by Harry asking: ‘Won’t he lose his way in the desert, and be starved to death?’

‘Not he,’ replied the Professor. ‘He has the stars to guide him—he travels mostly at night. He knows where to find water, and that is the chief thing. He carries some bunches of dried dates in his sash, and that is all he will want for a few days. He will be all right as far as that part of the business is concerned.’

They still sat looking into the ashes; at last Dick said slowly: ‘There’s something that I think I ought to tell you, Uncle.’ Then he narrated all that had passed between Abdulla and himself at the Cliff Temple, describing the secret of the revolving pillar in the throne of the Colossus, and repeating, almost in the same words, the warning of Abdulla.

Uncle Charlie sat in silence pondering the words; at last he looked up and said:

‘Abdulla is not easily frightened, as you may guess, and from his knowledge of how matters stand in the Soudan, his words ought to be regarded; but I really do not think there is any danger: Colonel Swain says there is none. He knows pretty well all that is going on, and gets it, if not first-hand, almost second-hand from Lord Cromer and the Sirdar. Kitchener is stretched across the Nile Valley at Wady Halfa, with a base at Assuan, and he is not asleep.

‘I suppose Abdulla thinks that the Dervishes might make a sort of flanking movement through the desert and enter the Nile Valley below Wady Halfa; somewhere about here, perhaps, or through the range of hills at the first Cataract; in fact he hinted something of the sort to me when we were on board the *Isis*, but it is too late in the day for such a movement. They could have done it at the outset, when they had practically destroyed the Egyptian army, and could have swept Egypt, but now it is too late. As Colonel Swain says, the wave of fanaticism that flooded the Soudan at the rise of the Mahdi has subsided, at any rate as far as the people are concerned; the Mahdi is dead, and they have seen too

much of the horrors of the Khalifa. It is true that the Dervish army under Osman Digna is as strong as ever, and more seasoned and better organized; but the spirit that swept it along has evaporated. I really don't think there is any danger.'

Nevertheless, the next day the boys caught sight of Uncle Charlie cleaning his revolver, and saw that he slipped the holster on to his belt. When he caught their glance he said with a laugh:

'There's nothing like being prepared, you know, and if it's wanted for nothing else it will do for a jackal if he comes sneaking round the larder at night; and while we are about it, boys, look here.'

He went to one of the boxes, turned over the things, and produced from the bottom two weapons the same pattern as his own.

'Here! you can take these,' he said. 'I bought them at Cairo. You had a little practice with the young officers on board the dahabeeyah; when you have nothing to do you can stick up something and have a little more. There's a good stock of cartridges, but don't waste them; and above all things, mind what I say, these are not toys for children to play with; so don't be foolish with them.'

Dick and Harry were not stupid boys; they were proud of the weapons, and of being entrusted with them; but they were fully alive to the danger of regarding them as playthings. Still, there is no denying that the pop of the pistols was heard very frequently in the quiet oasis.

'I'm not a soldier,' continued Uncle Charlie. 'In my opinion there's nothing like a good thick stick. I wouldn't shoot a man—not even the veriest savage—unless it was absolutely his life or mine. There's nothing like a good thick stick; it touches the spot, and consumes no ammunition.'

Nevertheless, he wore the revolver, though he certainly did procure a formidable stick.

(Continued on page 206.)

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TYPEWRITER.

THE typewriter is not quite such a recent invention as many of us may imagine it to be. As long ago as 1714 a patent was taken out in England by a man named Henry Mill, for a 'machine for impressing letters singly and progressively as in writing, whereby all writings may be engrossed on paper so exact as not to be distinguished from print.' But Mill's machine was a clumsy thing—practically useless. Nothing more of the kind was attempted until 1829, when the first American typewriter was patented by W. Burt. It was called a typographer.

DEWPONDS.

UPON the Downs in Sussex
The little dewponds shine:
More bright are they than silver ore
New smelted from the mine.
And sometimes they're of purest blue,
Reflecting summer skies,
Where far aloft the skylark sings,
And gliding sea-mew cries.

Upon the Downs in Sussex,
Where ancient shepherds pass,
Sheep browse and little blithe lambs play
Upon the tufted grass;
And often to the dewponds
You'll see them flock and drink,
All gathered close together
About the crystal brink.

Upon the Downs in Sussex
The little dewponds shine,
And no one knows who put them there
To comfort thirsty kine;
And no one knows if dew it be
Makes full each circle trim:
Perchance the fairies come at night
And fill them to the brim?

R. B. INCE.

THE HOME WORKSHOP.

Written and Illustrated by C. GRANT KING.

I.—HOW TO MAKE A WINDMILL.

IT should not be found very difficult to construct a working model windmill if we thoroughly master the drawings first. The model represents what was and is known as a Tower Mill. Strictly speaking, the top should be capable of moving round, but this would involve such complications that I am afraid you would give up its manufacture in disgust. The reason why the top should rotate was to enable the miller to keep his sails to the wind from any quarter, but in our case we must turn the whole mill.

The model is almost wholly of wood and strawboard, and fig. 1 shows its construction. We will begin with a general description. The four sails (the flat blades, that is) are attached at an angle of about twenty-five degrees to the arms, which in turn are fixed to the head of the inclined shaft, which has one bearing—or collar in which it turns—(b in fig. 1) in the front of the gable of the building and the other at the rear end of the shaft inside. On this shaft is a pinion wheel, with teeth that fit into a larger 'crown' wheel fixed to the top of the vertical or upright shaft. When either of these cogged wheels moves, it catches the cogs of the other wheel and makes it move too. We shall see how to make all these parts presently. This main shaft is kept upright by a bearing in the centre of the top floor (a in fig. 1) and by a step bearing at the foot on the ground floor. On this shaft are two loose bobbins or reels, which can be moved by clutch levers up or down the shaft, so arranged that when the bobbin is raised the pin in the top of each catches a cross wire just above, and thus the shaft makes the bobbin go round. The upper bobbin works the crane shown outside, enabling it to lift small weights, and the lower one is used to haul trucks or anything else outside the mill on the ground level.

The top of the mill is carried on eight supports resting on the floor with the outside gallery, which in turn is carried by nine short supports on the ground floor or base (see fig. 3).

The outside of the mill is covered with strawboard, and the gable roof also, one side of which opens to enable us to get to the machinery (fig. 3); one of the eight side-pieces of the mill itself also is removable for a like

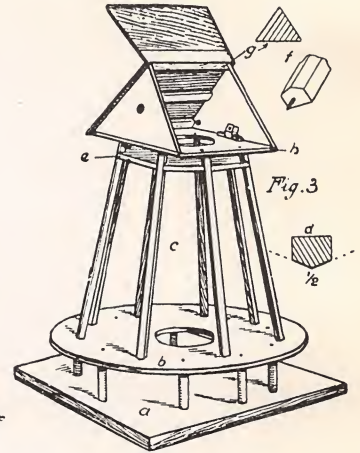
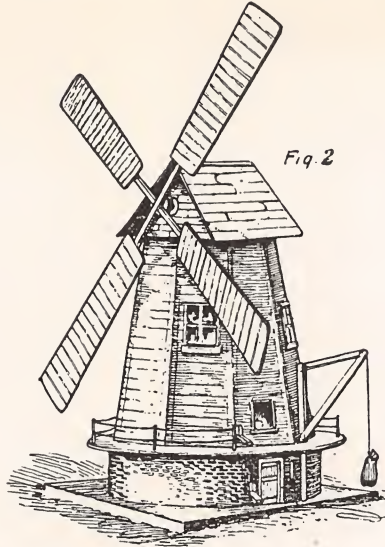
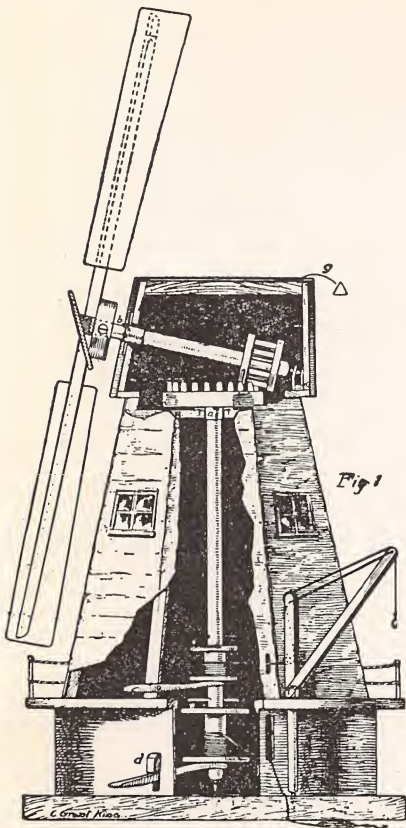


Fig. 1.—The General Structure of the Model Windmill.

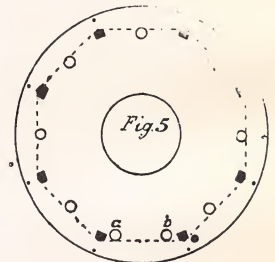
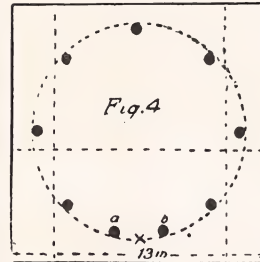
Fig. 2.—The Complete Windmill.

Fig. 3.—The Skeleton of the Windmill and Sections of some Parts.

purpose. The base of the mill is covered in by a strip of strawboard, bent round as will be seen later, the ends of this strip forming a doorway through which we see the lower bobbin or winder. The cord from this bobbin is carried, as shown, through the wall of the mill, and is used for hauling trucks, as has been said, by means of a hook; and by having a good large bobbin our trucks can be drawn some distance. The cord from the upper or crane bobbin also passes through the wall of the mill and continues under a small pulley wheel, thence up over a wheel in the crane post and over a pulley in the 'jib,' ending in a hook.

Let us suppose that our mill when finished is to be just over twenty-seven inches high; of course, a smaller one could be made to the same design, but the full size will be found no more difficult and much more efficient. The figures given here allow for that size. Fig. 2 shows the outside appearance of the mill when complete.

To begin building. For the base piece (or ground floor) we shall require a piece of wood not less than thirteen inches square and three-quarters of an inch or more thick (fig. 4); the base must be substantial to stand firmly in a breeze. If wood thirteen inches wide is not obtainable, we must use narrower stuff and join it; the simplest way to do this being to glue the edges and fix battens (cross sticks), as shown by the dotted lines; these battens should be underneath. Find the centre of this piece of wood—you can do this by cutting



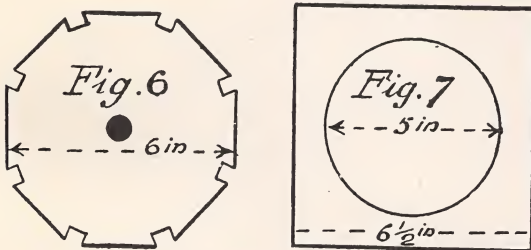
Figs. 4 and 5.—Ground Plans.

a piece of paper the exact size, and folding it from corner to corner, diagonally: the point where the diagonals cut one another is the centre—and with compasses describe a circle eleven inches in diameter, as shown by the dotted circle in fig. 4. Divide this circle into eight parts, and at seven of the points (not the bottom one, marked *x* in fig. 4) inscribe half-inch circles just to touch the large circle. In place of the eighth circle at the bottom (*x*) place two circles *a* and *b* at two inches apart equally distant from the eighth point. These are to come each side of the door: fig. 4 will make this clear, the black dots indicating these small circles.

Next obtain some round wood of about half an inch in diameter (white wood curtain-rods from an oil-shop will do well), and in each of our little circles with a carpenter's brace and bit make a hole a tight fit to the wooden rod, and about half an inch deep. Cut nine pieces of the round wood and glue them in the holes so that they stand quite upright and are all exactly the same length, measuring from the surface of the base-

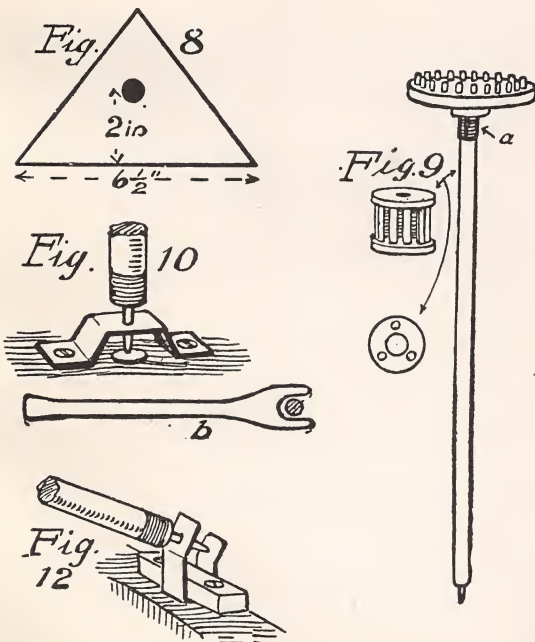
board; this length should be three inches. In the centre of this baseboard put a large-headed brass screw (not more than five-eighths of an inch long), letting the head stand up slightly above the surface, and file away the saw-cut in the head; over this, and centrally as shown in fig. 1, fix by screws the fitting shown in fig. 10: this forms the 'foot step'—the support for the foot—for the bottom of the shaft.

Fig. 5 (which is to fit at *b* in fig. 3) represents the next piece to make. This is three-eighths of an inch

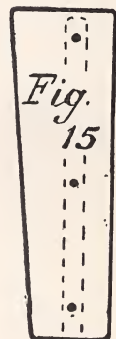
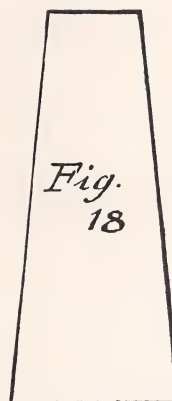
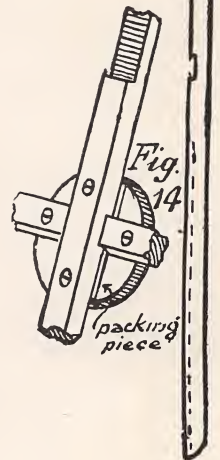
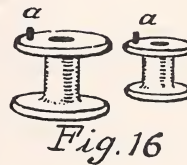
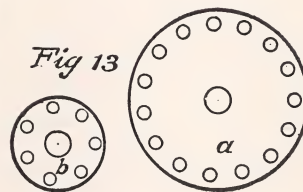
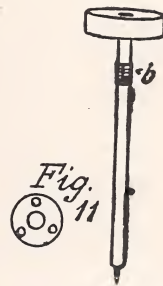


Figs. 6 and 7.

thick and thirteen inches in diameter, and may have to be made in two pieces, like the base; if so, let the battens, which should be on the underside, end inside the dotted octagon so as not to come in the way of the uprights. This disc should be drawn with the compasses, and from the same centre strike the smaller circle of four inches diameter, and also one of eleven and a half inches diameter. Inside this construct an octagon; the little black blotches at the angles of this octagon show where the feet of the uprights (*c* in fig. 3) are to come. The light circles in fig. 5 are to guide us



Figs. 8-12.—Various Parts.



Figs. 13-18.—Shafts, Sails, and other Parts.

in placing this disc on the uprights in the baseboard, and should be spaced exactly as in fig. 4. The outer row of dots close to the edge are holes three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, and are for the hand-rail stanchions of the outside gallery (see figs. 1 and 2). The shape of the black blotches just mentioned can be

seen in fig. 3, *d*, which is a section of the uprights. These uprights are made of half-inch by three-eighths wood, bevelled as shown. One other hole is shown in fig. 5, on the right hand near *b*: this is for the stem of the crane, and should be an easy fit to it.

Having cut out this disc (say with a fret-saw) and smoothed it up, glue it to the uprights in the baseboard in such manner that the light circles drawn on it come just over the uprights in the baseboard, especially *a* and *b*: put one fine wire nail about three-quarters of an inch long through the disc into each upright, and allow the glue to set.

Next cut eight pieces of wood half-inch by three-eighths of an inch and ten and a half inches long; shape one side as in fig. 3, *d*.

The top floor, fig. 6 (*e* in fig. 3), is another octagon, constructed in a circle of six and a half inches diameter. At the angles of this octagon, cut openings as shown to the shape of *d* in fig. 3, to fit the uprights tightly: this piece of wood should be a quarter or five-sixteenths of an inch thick, and have a hole in the centre three-quarters of an inch in diameter. This hole takes the top bearing of the vertical shaft.

We can now fix this floor and its supports to floor *b*. The supports will require bevelling slightly at the ends, to allow of the sloping angle at which they are fixed; this can be done with a file. Into the bottom of these uprights or supports push headless wire nails (see *f* in fig. 3), then glue and fix them to the floor *b*, care being taken to see that they stand on the little black marks drawn on that floor in fig. 5. Before the glue has set, fix the floor *e* with glue to the uprights, and exactly three-eighths of an inch from the tops of them (fig. 3, *e*). Finally, still before the glue sets, see that the angles the uprights make with the floor *b* are equal; it would be as well to cut a card gauge of this angle, which is one of about seventy-five degrees—i.e., a card sloping at that angle from a horizontal line.

Now from a piece of quarter or five-sixteenths inch wood cut fig. 7, six and a half inches square, with a hole in its centre of five inches diameter. Smooth up the edges, and prepare two triangles of quarter or five-sixteenths inch stuff, as in fig. 8, with a six and a half inch length of base, the apex or point of one being four inches high and that of the other three and seven-eighths inches; these triangles form the ends of the gable, and one is slightly higher than the other, as it is to be fixed at a different angle (see fig. 1, the top sides). Two inches from the base of the taller piece, and in the centre of it, make a hole three-quarters of an inch in diameter for the shaft. Fix these two triangular pieces one at each end of the floor (fig. 7 and fig. 3, *h*) with glue and pins; the back piece is at right angles to the floor, and the front one at the angles shown in fig. 1. Between the tops of these triangular pieces, an inner piece (fig. 1, *g*, and fig. 3, *g*) is glued to keep all firm. Two additional cross pieces (shown in fig. 3) also serve the same purpose, rather like battens. These may be, say, quarter inch by half inch; do not put these on the side shown open in fig. 3 until the shafts are finished and in place, or you will be unable to put the latter in position.

Now obtain a piece of round wood (curtain rod will do excellently) of half-inch diameter and fourteen inches long; this is for the vertical shaft seen in fig. 9 and fig. 1. In the bottom fit a round headless wire nail, to form the lower bearing, which runs on the screw head

we put in the baseboard; it is kept in position laterally by the little thin brass or stout tin fitting illustrated in figs 1 and 10, which should have already been fitted to the baseboard. This fitting should be bent from a piece of stuff about half-inch wide by two and a quarter inches long, having a hole in the centre which fits the nail in the shaft easily, and two holes for fixing screws.

Another piece of round wood half-inch in diameter and seven inches long is cut for the inclined shaft carrying the sails (figs. 1 and 11). This also has a headless round wire nail in one end which runs in another little fitting of thin brass or stout tin (figs. 12, 1, and 3): this bearing is held in place by a piece of wood and two screws. On both shafts a short length of thin brass tube is driven (a tight fit) in the positions seen in figs. 1, 9, and 11: these constitute the 'journals,' which run in the bearings, made of thin sheet brass and screwed centrally to the top floor and gable. They are shown round in figs. 9 and 11, but would be quite as well square if more easy to make; they should not be fixed till the shafts are in position.

We next make the crown wheel and pinion (fig. 9), and here we must exercise our greatest care. To make the larger or crown wheel, cut a disc of three and a half inches diameter (fig. 13, *a*) out of a piece of half-inch wood; strike with the compasses a circle of three inches diameter exactly, divide this circle into fifteen equal parts, and make fifteen clean round holes of quarter-inch diameter. Into these holes glue fifteen little round wooden pegs of hard wood (they can be cut from meat-skewers), letting them all project five-sixteenths of an inch equally; and with a file or glass paper just round off the top corners as in fig. 1, to enable them to work in the pinion smoothly. Before fitting the pegs, drill carefully a hole in the centre of this disc; this hole must fit the vertical shaft firmly, and must be drilled quite square to the face of the disc: it is fixed to the shaft with a touch of glue, but not yet, for its exact position must be found by trial. The vertical shaft may quite conveniently project through this wheel so long as it does not touch the inclined shaft (it is not shown projecting in fig. 1, as it would have confused the drawing somewhat).

To make the pinion wheel, cut two discs of one and three-quarters inch diameter from quarter-inch wood (figs. 13, *b*, and 9): temporarily fix them together by gluing a piece of paper between them, sandwich fashion, using only a touch of glue, just sufficient to hold them while drilling. On one side, with the compasses, describe a circle of one and three-eighths of an inch diameter and divide this into seven parts, drill quarter-inch holes evenly right through both discs at these seven points, and also a central hole right through of a size to be a good fit on the shaft. Now separate carefully the two discs, using the thin blade of a knife; the teeth are seven little pieces of quarter-inch round wood one and a quarter inch long (cut from a meat-skewer). Glue these into the two discs as in fig. 9, being very careful not to split the discs; keep all nice and square, and let the ends of the teeth come flush with the outside.

On the outer end of the upper or sloping shaft in fig. 1 will be seen a circular piece of wood to which are screwed the sail arms: this piece is two inches diameter and not less than five-eighths of an inch thick, and has a hole evenly drilled in its centre, a good fit to the shaft (it had better be drilled before cutting out); it is fixed

to the shaft by a long screw (shown in fig. 1), whose point just enters the shaft.

The sail arms are of two pieces of straight-grained wood half-inch by five-eighths of an inch and twenty-two inches long (fig. 14), and are fixed to the head by four screws. These arms are cut when they cross, but not deeply, as that would weaken them too much, packing pieces being used to fill up the space (fig. 14). The arms are bevelled where the sails come, so that the sails are fixed at an angle of about twenty-five degrees with the plane in which they rotate. The sails are of the shape shown in fig. 15, of thin wood, say one-eighth of an inch thick, and are nine inches long by two and three-quarter inches wide at the outer end and two and a quarter inches wide at the inner: they are fixed to the arms with glue and small screws, as indicated by the dotted lines in fig. 15.

The bobbins for hauling and lifting (figs. 1 and 16) could very well be made of cotton reels, with the holes enlarged to run freely on the vertical shaft, and having circular flanges of thin wood glued on each end, the top flange in each case having a catch (*a* in fig. 16), to engage the driving wire fixed in the shaft just above it; or the bobbins might be of straw tube with flanges glued to each end.

The clutch levers (figs. 1 and 10, *b*) explain themselves: they have forked ends which encircle the shaft and lift the bobbins. They are of wood about a quarter of an inch thick and about eight inches long over all, they are pivoted on screws to the uprights of the mill, and their duty is to raise, when their outer ends are depressed, the bobbins into gear with the cross wires. When finally erected, little blocks of wood (of which fig. 1, *d* is one) must be glued outside, to prevent the bobbins falling too low. The position of the driving wires is found by putting the shaft, bobbins, and levers in place and marking the shaft with pencil just above the catches on the bobbins, and then making small holes into which are fixed pieces of stiff wire.

The crane explains itself in figs. 1 and 17. The lower part is round, and has a wire (headless) nail in the base as a pivot. The upper part is formed of two flat thin pieces of wood about half an inch wide by one-eighth of an inch thick, glued to the round piece, which has two flats at the top to receive them: this is clear in fig. 17. There are three small grooved pulley wheels (window-blind wheels would do) of hard wood for the cord to run over, running on pins. The total height of the crane post is about seven inches. The crane 'jib' (or sloping arm) is of two pieces of flat thin wood glued and pinned to the post (fig. 1), and having wire struts each side at the top.

Now place the vertical shaft in position with the bobbins on it, fix the upper bearing plate (fig. 1) to the floor, and put the crown wheel on the shaft (but do not fix yet); fix the clutch levers, and put the inclined shaft in place with its step bearing, which must be fixed as explained, and also fix the outer bearing of this shaft. Slide the pinion and crown wheels along their respective shafts until they gear, or work together, smoothly; mark their positions, and fix with a little glue. The little step bearing of the inclined shaft *may* have to be raised a little, in this operation of adjusting, but should not.

Cut from a piece of strawboard the two pieces for the roof; one is fixed, and the other is hinged by a piece of linen as shown in fig. 3. From strawboard cut also

eight pieces of the shape fig. 18, to case in the upper part of the mill with; their actual size must be taken from our model. They are all glued on except one which is removable, to get at the bobbins. The windows should have the sashes and frames glued on; this will assist the realism when we come to paint the mill. All openings in these pieces of strawboard must be cut before fixing. The base of the mill is cased in with a long strip of strawboard of a width equal to the distance between the lower two floors and long enough to fix to the two uprights at *a* and *b* in figs. 4 and 5, leaving an opening for the door about two inches wide. Add door-posts, and cut an opening for the haulage rope. The door of strawboard may be fixed or movable as your fancy dictates. The hand-rail stanchions may be fixed; also the sails, arms, and head to the shaft, and the whole sized and painted. Here you must use your ingenuity. Fig. 2 will give you suggestions for this. When all is dry, put the crane in its place and connect the cords to the bobbins, and the cord hand-rail to the stanchions.

Everything should be now quite clear, but if not, study carefully the drawings, and see the meaning and shape of each part before beginning to build. Little variations in dimensions may easily be made to suit the materials you may have by you, if you are quite sure you understand the principles on which the mill is made.

By putting a fixed grooved pulley on the vertical shaft, our little mill might be used to drive small mechanical toys or models. If the wind is very strong, we must either weight the mill or peg it down, using pegs like tent-pegs.

THE LITTLE LOAF.

DURING a time of famine in France, a rich man invited twenty poor children of the town to his house, where he showed them a very large basket. 'In this basket,' he said, 'is a loaf for each one of you. Take it, and come here every day at this hour until God sends us better times.' The children—all but one—pounced upon the basket. They wrangled and fought for the bread. Each wanted to get the biggest loaf, and they—all but one—went away without thanking their kind friend. Only little Francesca stood aside and did not join in the scramble. When the others had gone, she took the one loaf in the basket, which was the very smallest loaf of the lot. Then, after gratefully kissing the rich man's hand, she went quietly away to her home.

On the following day, the children behaved as badly as before, and this time Francesca's loaf was scarcely half the size of the other loaves. But when she reached home, and her sick mother cut the bread, there fell out of it a number of bright silver coins. 'Take back this money at once,' said the woman in alarm; 'it must have got into the loaf by mistake.' So Francesca took the money to the gentleman, who received her very kindly. 'It was no mistake, my child,' he said; 'this money is yours. I had it baked in the smallest loaf expressly for you. Take it as a reward for your modesty and gentleness. I hope you will always behave as you do now. For the person who throughout her life contents herself with the smallest loaf rather than quarrel for a larger one, will receive far greater blessings than the money which you found to-day in your bread.'



"There fell out of it a number of bright silver coins."



“The butler looked down curiously at the little figure before him.”

IN SEARCH OF A FAIRY.

'WHERE are you going to?' Freda raised an inquiring face from the book she was reading, and looked at the muffled-up figure in the doorway with some curiosity.

Claude glanced round mysteriously, then advanced on tiptoe into the lamplight. 'I'm going out into the wood,' he said, lowering his voice confidentially. 'I'm going to look for a fairy!'

Freda's dark eyes glistened, and she laid down her book as she rose to her feet. 'Let me come too!' she pleaded. 'I want a wish just as badly as you do. I want to go and see the aeroplanes to-morrow, too!'

'Come on, then. Hurry up and get a coat!' commanded Claude; and then they both looked round, as a small white figure suddenly emerged from the shadows beside the big fireplace.

'Ruth! I had forgotten you were there!' exclaimed Freda, looking rather crossly at the eager face upraised in the light of the lamp.

But the little girl did not seem to notice the annoyance in her sister's voice. 'Let me come with you!' she begged, looking anxiously from one to the other; then she took a step backwards, as a shriek of laughter rose from the lips of her brother and sister.

'You! Why, you'd be afraid of the dark!' jeered Claude. 'I should like to see you talking to a fairy!'

'You're *much* too young,' asserted Freda in a superior tone, as she turned away in search of her coat: and a minute later the heavy door had closed behind the two, leaving Ruth alone in the shadows with the echo of her sister's parting words still ringing in her ears.

Only the firelight saw the pathetic quiver of Ruth's mouth as she stood on the thick fur rug, gazing wistfully into the heart of the glowing coals. Why did they say she was too young to search for a fairy in the wood? She was only one year younger than Freda after all, though she and Claude persisted in treating her like a baby. There was nothing to prevent her following them into the darkness, to prove that she was not afraid. As the thought came to her she looked bravely round into the shadows of the hall, an ever-growing resolution gathering in her wide, excited eyes. Then she moved quickly to the old oak bench on which her jacket lay, and began buttoning it across her chest with trembling fingers. A minute later the door had closed behind her, and she was racing along the drive as fast as her legs would carry her.

The moonlight, flickering through the tree-tops, threw weird shadows on to the ground below, and Ruth's heart beat unevenly as she left the road, and made her way into the darkness of the wood beyond. Stumbling over the rough ground, she kept looking anxiously around for the fairies that she felt so certain lurked in the shadowy nooks, and hid themselves in the entwined branches of the trees. She remembered the pictures in the fairy-books at home: the little shining sprites flitting hither and thither, or hiding in some sheltered corner. Then, as she looked at the ground, her heart gave a great jump of excitement, for in the darkness at her feet she saw a little bright light shining steadily through the gloom.

In a minute she was on her knees, watching the still spark with excited eyes, as her voice came in an eager question: 'You are a fairy, aren't you?'

No movement from the tiny creature stirred the soft leaf on which it lay, and Ruth raised her head and stared anxiously into the darkness; then suddenly she bent down, and breaking the stem of the plant, clasped it tightly in her arms, and began hurriedly retracing her footsteps through the wood.

She had forgotten all her fears of the darkness as she made her way over the rough ground, and her breath came quickly with excitement. Freda and Claude could never call her a baby any more, and as soon as the fairy awoke she would grant the wish that they all wanted, and they would be able to see the aeroplanes to-morrow after all! So absorbed was she in her thoughts that some time went by before she found that she had missed her way, and turned aside from the pathway that led to the high road. Now the wood was thicker, the ground more rough and stubby, and the dark tree-tops almost hid the light of the moon. For some minutes she was really frightened, hurrying backwards and forwards as she tried to find the path, or any way out of the thick undergrowth, until she caught sight of a light shining through the trees in the distance. Joyfully she turned her steps towards it, and it was not long before she found herself standing in front of a large house, from the windows of which bright rays of light streamed into the darkness.

Ruth clambered boldly up the steep stone steps that led to the hall door, and pulled the heavy bell with all her strength. A moment later an old butler appeared on the threshold, and looked down curiously at the little figure before him.

'You have a long way to go,' he said in reply to Ruth's question; then he looked round, as the soft swish of a silk dress was heard behind him in the hall.

'What is it, Lomax?'

Ruth took an eager step forward as a kind-looking old lady advanced, and peered inquiringly past the butler into the darkness. 'I have got lost in the wood,' she explained. 'I want to get back to Rosedale, and I'm so dreadfully afraid I shall be late.'

She turned her eyes anxiously to the plant in her hand, and a sudden cry of dismay made the old lady look round in alarm.

'The fairy! It's gone! Look!—the beetle must have eaten it!' Ruth held up the drooping plant, and the light showed an ugly dark insect where the pretty shining spark had been.

'A glow-worm, Miss,' said the butler. 'It will shine again if you put it out of the light.'

But Ruth hardly heard what he said. The tears had rushed to her eyes, and she was turning to hide them in the darkness when the old lady stepped forward and laid a kind hand on her shoulder.

'Come in and tell me all about it, my dear,' she said. 'I will order the carriage to take you home, and you shall rest with me until it comes.'

A few minutes later, Ruth was pouring out all the story of her troubles into her new friend's ear. The old lady listened intently, and did not speak until everything was told; then she took the little cold hand, and held it in hers. 'My dear, there are no fairies in the world,' she said. 'Fairies only live in story-books. Freda and Claude will not have found one this evening, any more than you have done.'

'They *will* be disappointed,' murmured Ruth. 'They did want to see the flying so much.'

The old lady paused before she spoke again, then she looked down with a smile. 'I am driving over to see the aeroplanes to-morrow,' she said. 'I wonder if I could find room for three little people in the carriage with me?'

For a moment Ruth could hardly believe her ears, then she jumped excitedly to her feet. 'Oh! how wonderful!' she exclaimed, with dancing eyes. 'They can never say that I am too young to do things now! And after all,' she added shyly, 'even if there aren't any real fairies like the ones in the story-books, you are a sort of pretence one, aren't you—because you've made all our wishes come true?'
 VIOLA VIVIAN.

VOICES FROM THE ETHER.

A TELEGRAPHIC tapper is sending out messages from the world's largest ship—messages appealing for instant help. Far away on another ship a man with his ears to a telephonic receiver hears the signals, interprets them, and informs his captain. Result: over seven hundred people saved who, but for those movements of the tapper, would most probably have lost their lives in common with the 1490 victims of the *Titanic* disaster. Three years before that disaster, the 'extreme danger' signals flung out into the ether from the S.S. *Republic's* aerial wires rescued one thousand persons from most imminent peril; while the Navies of the world now speak with one another or with headquarters with a speed never dreamed of by Nelson or Drake. Wherever a ship may be on the world of waters, modern science has made it possible for her to keep in touch with other ships, and through them with the land, or with the land directly. The ocean liner's daily 'bulletin' containing the news of the day is now almost commonplace, though a wonder but a few years ago.

As recently as 1896 Mr. Marconi astonished the world by sending a 'wireless' message across two miles of Salisbury Plain. In 1910 he received in Buenos Aires a message dispatched from the wireless telegraph station at Clifden, in Ireland, nearly seven thousand miles away. Wireless telegraphy across the Atlantic is now an everyday practice. England can speak with most European countries, and will before long be put in direct touch with Egypt, India, the Malay Peninsula, and South Africa. And this quite independently of the submarine cables and overland telegraph lines yet laid or to be laid. All over the world great 'wireless' stations are being erected to take fuller advantage of the fact that the invisible and mysterious ether which extends through all matter and space is able to transmit waves of electric energy just as it transmits light.

The principles of wireless telegraphy are really simple. Suppose a large tube of stout rubber to have one end connected with an air-pump, and the other provided with a valve, which when the pressure reaches a certain point opens suddenly and allows the air to rush out. This tube is laid on the surface of a pond, and the pump is set to work. The tube grows bulkier and bulkier till the valve suddenly releases the pressure. The sudden contraction of the tube causes ripples, which spread across the pond.

At the opposite side of the pond is another tube with closed ends, and a pipe leading from it to an extremely sensitive pressure-gauge. Each ripple, as it strikes against this tube, compresses it slightly: and the rise in

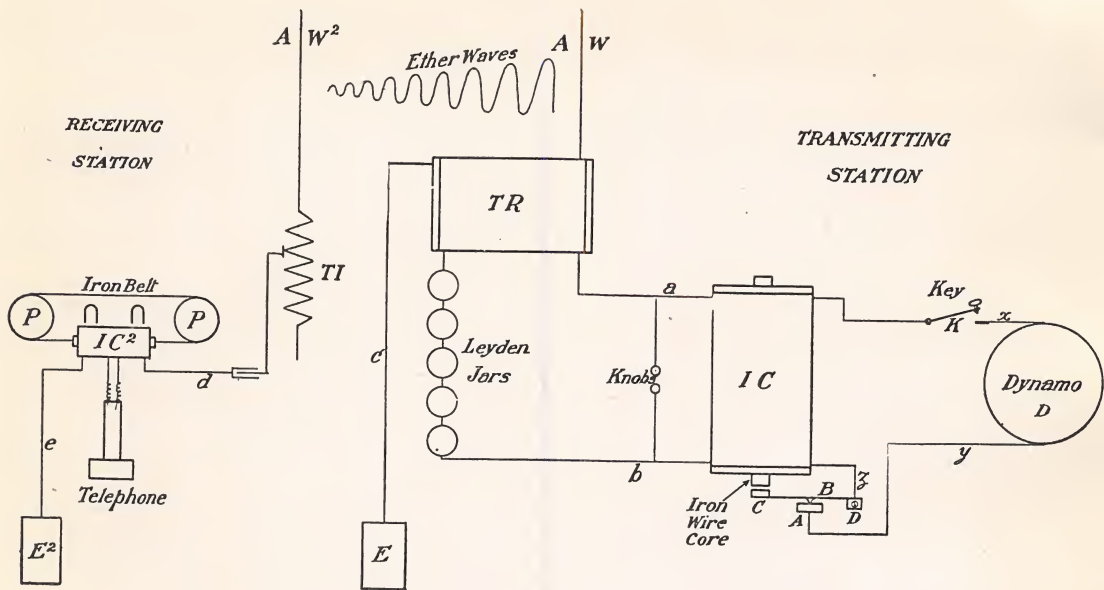
pressure of the air inside—also the fall after the force of the ripple is spent—is shown on the gauge. Imagine, further, that the transmitter tube is being filled and discharged an incredible number of times per second and that the ripples are therefore moving at lightning speed across the pond one after the other.

Now let us substitute for the compressed air an electric current of very high pressure; for the first tube a wire conductor carried far up into the air by poles, with one end almost touching another wire running to a plate buried in the ground; and for the pond, the ether. Current is poured into the upper wire until the pressure causes the current to leap the gap separating the upper wire from the earth-wire and so find an escape. The sudden fall of electrical pressure in the wire, which occurs as soon as the current escapes, affects the state of the ether round the wire, and 'waves' of electrical disturbance radiate in all directions, like the ripples in the pond. These waves strike the aerial wire of a receiving station and affect a very delicate electrical apparatus joined to a telephone receiver or some form of mechanical recorder, by which the effect of the electric waves is rendered audible or visible.

The illustration on page 204 shows one form of apparatus for sending out such electric waves. A dynamo or battery D generates a direct electric current, which is led off to an induction coil I C by the wires *x* and *y*. The tapper key K is used for closing the circuit at pre-arranged intervals to make the signals. Wire *y* leads to a contact *a* against which presses a spring (or 'interrupter') B, fixed at D, whence a wire runs to one end of the inner coil, called the 'primary winding,' of I C. The other end of this coil I C, is in connection with K.

When K is pressed down and closed, current flows through *y*, A, B, and Z, and the primary winding of I C back through *x* to D. The iron core of I C is thus magnetised, and so attracts the iron block C on the free end of B. This separates B from A and breaks the circuit, and B flies back. Thus the coil and the spring alternately pull B to and fro at a very high speed, causing the primary current through I C to be interrupted many times a second.

A 'secondary winding' of several miles of fine wire surrounds the primary winding of I C. Whenever the circuit is closed by the 'interrupter' B, waves of force spring out from the primary coil in all directions; when the circuit is broken they fall back into the coil. Their movements may be compared to that of a bladder being rapidly inflated and deflated. As they swell and fall they cut through the turns of the secondary winding and cause 'induced' currents of great intensity to pass into *a* and *b*, and through a circuit which includes the primary coil of transformer T R and a battery of 'Leyden' jars, which act as reservoirs of energy. At every vibration of B this circuit is charged beyond bursting-point, so to speak, and a discharge takes place between the knobs. The secondary winding of the transformer (T R) is affected by fluctuations of current in its primary winding, just as that of the induction coil was; and tremendous disturbances are set up in the aerial wire A W, and the wire C running to earth-plate E, which form the ends of the secondary coil of T R. The vibrator of I C is set to move at such a rate—say forty times per second—as to give out an audible note. At every vibration a train of electrical waves (indicated in the diagram by a snaky line) is flung off



How Wireless Waves are sent out.

into the ether, these waves, though of equal length from crest to crest, becoming flatter as they travel. Each train is separated from its successors by what we may call a 'calm' period. While the key is pressed down to make a 'dot' in the Morse code, perhaps a dozen trains of waves, following closely behind one another, may be projected into the ether.

The waves of a train are caught at the receiving station by an aerial wire AW^2 , and pass through a tuning inductance coil, TI , and a condenser to wire d , which runs to a coil surrounding a small glass tube at the centre of IC^2 , and thence to earth-plate E^2 . Outside this coil is a secondary coil in circuit with a telephone ear-piece.

By means of TI , which in effect enables the length of AW^2 to be adjusted, the receiver is 'tuned' to the waves thrown off by the transmitter. Now, close to IC^2 are a couple of permanent magnets of horseshoe shape. From these magnets 'lines of force' reach out to an endless belt of iron wires twisted together, which is moved slowly through the central glass tube by the rotating pulleys P . The electric 'jolts' given to the primary winding of IC^2 by the incoming waves cause disturbances in the magnetic fields of the magnets, and these are magnified by the secondary coil in circuit with the telephone. The reason for providing IC with a moving core is that iron, however well it be prepared, does not de-magnetise quite instantaneously, and so tends to act as a drag on the fluctuations in the field. But by keeping the belt in motion, any one part of it, after serving its turn, is taken out of the way; and before it returns to the tube has had time to become completely de-magnetised.

The operator with his ear to the telephone hears the flutter caused by every train of waves, not by the individual waves, and is aware of the silences between them. These fluctuations, corresponding to the vibrations

of B in the transmitter, cause a faint noise, easily distinguished by the operator's trained ear. Burr-r-r-r-r—Burr-r-r—Burr-r-r-r-r—Burr-r-r (long—short—long—short), that means C : Burr-r-r—Burr-r-r-r-r (short—long), that is A ; and so on.

(Concluded on page 229.)

AN UNEXPECTED TREAT.

'CHARLIE, you're to take this book to Mr. Turner's.'

'Oh, Edgar, did Father say so? I don't like going through the woods in the dusk.'

'I say so,' replied Edgar; 'that's quite enough for you. Baby! Afraid of the shadows!'

Charlie flushed scarlet, but rose slowly from the floor where he and May had been playing.

When he arrived at the door he found May. 'I'm coming with you, Charlie,' she said. 'It's horrid to be alone in the woods. We shan't mind together—at least, not much.'

'You are a brick, May,' replied her brother. 'It just makes all the difference having you. It's awfully brave of you to come with me. I suppose Edgar wants to go out with some of the fellows.'

The two ran down the lane and were soon among the trees. The wind whistled in the branches and the shadows looked very frightening, but they held each other's hands tightly, and after a fairly long walk arrived at the house and rang the bell. The door was immediately thrown open, and a boy and girl of their own age peeped out under the butler's arm.

'Oh, it's Charlie and May! How jolly! Come in. We're nearly ready to begin.'

The two looked puzzled. It sounded almost as if



“ ‘Hullo, Charlie! Come along, May!’ ”

they were expected. Just then Mr. Turner came out of a room. Charlie immediately handed the book. ‘Please, Father has sent this.’

‘Oh, thank you, my boy. Come in. The magic lantern is just ready.’

‘Oh, I’m afraid we mustn’t stay,’ replied Charlie,

looking longingly towards the room where voices could be heard. 'It would be too late to go home in the dark.'

'Oh, nonsense!' said Mr. Turner. 'I saw your father this afternoon, and told him I should keep whoever brought the book, and send them home in the carriage at nine o'clock. It will be all right.'

'Take off your coat, May,' said Florrie Turner. 'Uncle Jack came yesterday, and said if we could find any friends to see them he would show us some pictures to-night. So Fred and I went round this morning and asked a lot of boys and girls.'

As the door of the room opened, there was a chorus of voices: 'Hul o, Charlie! Come along, May! There's room here!'

They were squeezed in among the crowd facing the large sheet. As they sat down Charlie whispered, 'It ought to have been Edgar, May—not us.'

May nodded and replied, 'I'm glad you're going to see it instead.'

'You deserve it most, May, because you came to help me,' whispered back her brother. Then they relapsed into silence as the gas was turned down and the first picture was thrown on to the sheet. There were all sorts of things—places, animals, birds, comic pictures, and portraits. Uncle Jack had tales to tell about them all, and kept them in fits of laughter with his stories and jokes.

'Now,' said Mrs. Turner at last, as the lights went up, 'there is just time for some refreshment before the carriage comes.'

'Isn't Uncle Jack jolly?' said Fred to Charlie.

'Ripping!' replied Charlie. 'Has he seen all these places?'

'Every one,' said Fred, proudly. 'He's been all round the world. Perhaps he will show us some more another night. You and May must come again.'

'Would you mind asking Edgar instead?' asked Charlie, hesitatingly.

'Oh, he can come too. There's the carriage.'

'Good-night, Mrs. Turner, and thank you very much,' said Charlie, gratefully, as he shook hands.

'Good-night, Mr. Jack,' added May, shyly. 'The pictures were lovely.'

'Good-night, little girl,' replied Uncle Jack. 'You must come again.'

They were both tucked into the carriage in company with as many more as could be squeezed in. The drive was great fun. Every few minutes the carriage stopped and one or two got out, till at last it was Charlie's and May's turn. They jumped out and ran into the dining-room. Edgar was reading. When they ran in he looked up at the beaming faces. 'Where on earth have you been all this time? Mother will be angry.'

'There was a magic-lantern!' said Charlie, excitedly.

'And Mr. Turner had told Father whoever took the book was to stay and see it,' added May.

'And we have come home in the carriage,' went on her brother.

'And it has been too lovely for words!' finished May.

'At this moment their father and mother entered.

'What a shame!' said Edgar. 'You two always get the fun.'

'What fun, Edgar?' said Mr. Dale.

Of course the tale had to be told again. At the end Mr. Dale said sharply, 'But I told you to take the book, Edgar. You know perfectly well I should not have

sent Charlie at that time of night. If you had done as you were told you would have had the treat.'

The boy did not reply, but his disappointment was so plain that May slipped her hand into her father's, whispering, 'Poor Edgar!' And Mr. Dale said no more, but left the lesson to sink in.

Edgar left the room hurriedly followed by Charlie, who said comfortingly, 'Never mind, Edgar; Fred says their Uncle Jack is going to show them some more pictures, and you are to go next time.'

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 195.)

CHAPTER XIV.

ANOTHER week passed—a very quiet week. Things were at a standstill as far as the temple was concerned; Uncle Charlie often spent the whole day there, starting in the cool of the morning and returning in the evening, and when the usual inquiry was made if 'anything had turned up,' it received only a gloomy shake of the head. He became very abstracted in his manner, and would sit for hours frowning at a piece of paper on his knee, and biting the end of a lead-pencil, and occasionally making a rough diagram. Sometimes Harry, whose foot was quite strong again, would go with him to the temple, or drop in during the day to take a photograph, or visit his dark-room to change his plates.

The excursion to Crocodile Creek had come off, and had been a success. The boys had brought home several brace of wild-fowl and some sand-grouse. Unfortunately, half these went bad before they could be eaten, owing to the heat, and had to be buried in the sand; and Selim's heart had been delighted by the capture of another mud-tortoise.

Harry had dressed the hyæna's skin, and made it perfectly clean and pliable. What became of the horrible carcase nobody ever knew, it disappeared in the night, leaving not a single trace behind. Uncle Charlie said nothing could have so completely cleared it up but a brother hyæna.

Harry contemplated providing the camp with an abundant supply of palm-wine, but this never came off, and Selim had a scheme in hand for conveying water to the kitchen without the trouble of fetching it from the spring in a bucket.

It was then that Harry made a discovery that set the ball rolling again. He had now, after a fashion, fitted up his dark-room at the temple, and removed his stock of chemicals, his ruby lamp, and developing-trays there. He had made a screen, and purloined candles and boxes of matches innumerable. His chief trouble was a supply of water, the lack of which at the temple was almost fatal to his plans. All had to be brought from the camp in the ship of the desert, and one or two accidents by the way had almost brought him to a state of desperation. He had made a tolerable tank from a very large biscuit-tin, which with much difficulty he had rendered quite water-tight, and had abstracted a bucket from the kitchen. This had brought him into collision with Selim, who was also deep in the undertaking of water-supply. There had been, as is so often the case in this world, a violent quarrel

and a compromise. But Harry was now fairly settled; he had ranged his bottles along the ledge of a convenient recess in the crumbling wall of the dark-room. With some difficulty he had driven in a nail and fixed his screen, sloping it forward, and behind it two candles burned. His head was bent over the developing-tray, rocking it slowly backwards and forwards, as he looked at the ghost of a picture that was beginning to appear. It was at this moment, when all his attention was fixed on what he was doing, that a thought flashed into Harry's mind which quite staggered him.

It is sometimes the case that when our minds are completely concentrated on a subject, a thought of something quite different pops into our funny little brain-boxes, and startles us as if it were a voice from without. It was so with Harry. 'What about that recess behind you?' was the thought that bubbled almost audibly in his brain. 'Is that the walled-up door we've been looking for?' Harry finished developing the plate and placed it in the pail of water, then taking a candle in each hand he crossed the floor and surveyed the recess. It was a shallow place, with nothing remarkable in its appearance; the bottom ledge of it breast-high in the wall and ascending to the roof; but he saw plainly that the stonework did not agree with that of the surrounding walls—the stones were smaller and differently arranged. The hands that held the candles trembled. Could this have been the gateway or part of the gateway between the north towers?

Harry quickly removed his bottles of chemicals from the ledge, and beat on the wall of the recess with a stone loosened from the floor, and then on the opposite wall, and fancied, though it could have been nothing more, that the wall of the recess gave forth a more hollow sound. He had no tools with him, except the hammer he had been using and some nails, and with these he decided to work out one of the stones, so taking a large flat nail as a chisel he began chipping out the cement. The work was slow, for the cement seemed harder than the stone itself, which in many places was soft and crumbled; he continued to work patiently till the candles burnt out. The stone was loosened all round, and at a push fell on the other side with a hollow, echoing noise. It was dark within, and he thrust his arm through to its full length without anything to meet his touch; he tried with the tripod of his camera—still there was nothing but empty space. He could do no more that day for want of tools, and it was getting very late, so he returned to camp in a state of great excitement, smiling to himself and muttering, 'I won't say anything about it to Uncle Charlie. I'll bring a crowbar to-morrow, and then we shall see.'

The next day he was at the temple early with a crowbar, some cord, and more candles, and the dark-room was soon echoing to the sound of his vigorous blows. In an hour's time he had made a hole big enough to admit his body, but he did not venture into the black cavity till he had poked about with the crowbar in a vain search for the bottom. That it could not be at a great depth he knew from the sound of the stone he had pushed in the previous evening. The cord, weighted at the end with a stone, found it at a depth of a little over four feet. Letting himself down, he lit a candle and looked around.

He was standing, not on the floor, but on the small pile of stones that he had wrenched from the wall: the floor, a little beneath, was covered with debris and the accumulated dust of centuries. High up in the wall—

some forty feet—was a round opening, showing the light of day. No ray spread from it, but above and below was pitchy darkness; it was a disc of light like the full moon at midnight, and produced a weird and startling effect. With careful steps the candle-bearer crept along the walls, till at one corner he found the opening of a tunnel about six feet high and four across, the floor sloping gradually upwards.

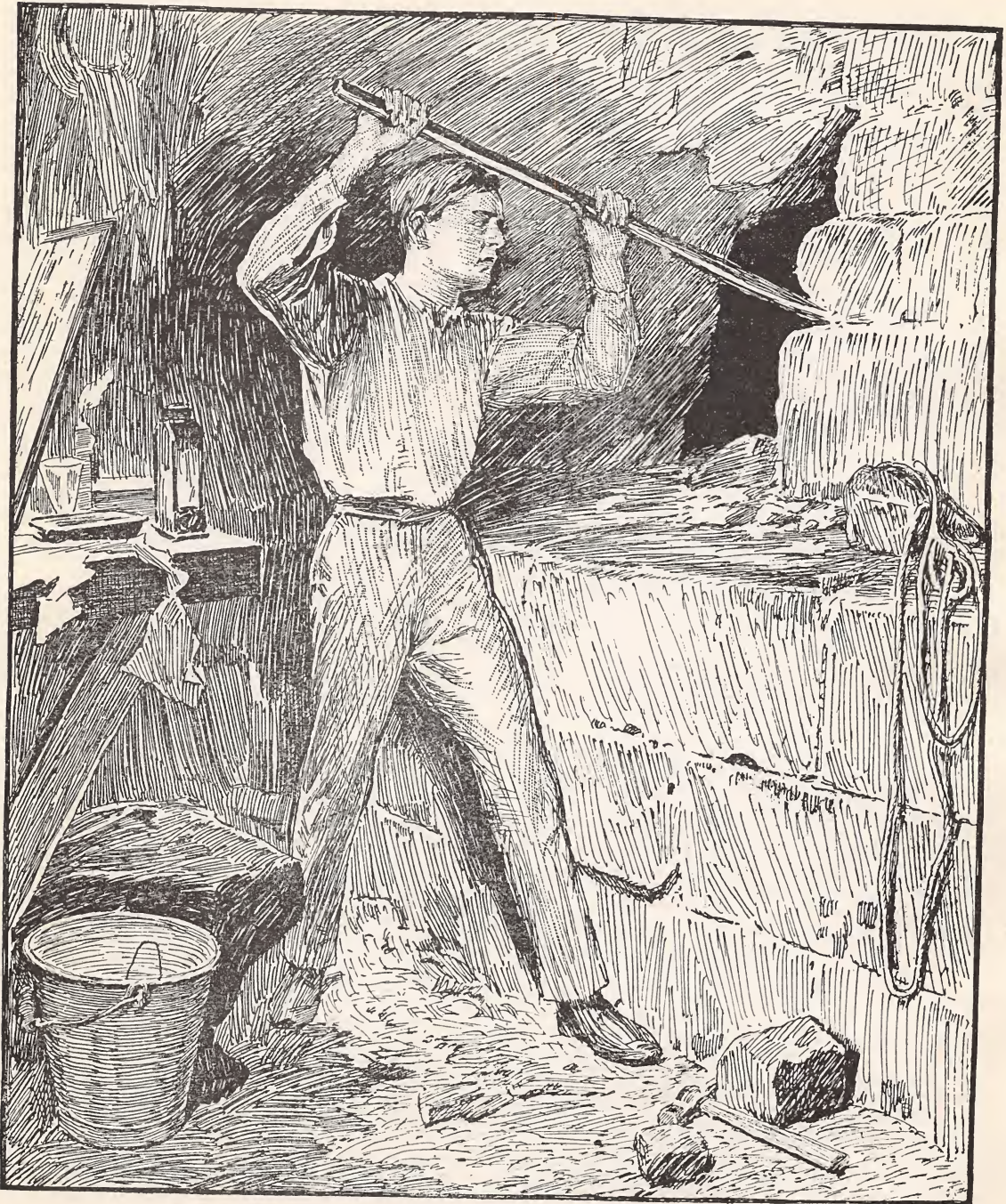
At a distance of a dozen yards the passage turned sharply and, still ascending, took an opposite direction, and further on again the same—a sharp angle in the opposite direction. He soon began to realise that the passage was an ascending zigzag. As he made the fourth of the turnings he was met by a flash of light, and proceeding to the end, found himself in a small illuminated chamber, in appearance reminding him somewhat of the little chapels he had seen in cathedrals at home. Directly facing him stood a small platform of stone, like an altar, its upper surface covered with fragments fallen from the roof and the all-pervading dust, and mingled with this ruin were sherds of painted pottery and stone vases. The light fell focussed upon this altar and the small image of a god that stood shattered there. On the sides and above the altar the wall bore traces of decoration—paintings, in some places faint and half-erased, in others startlingly clear and fresh in colour—red-brown figures of great size with enormous head-dresses, and tiny figures at their feet—a confusion of kings, slaves, and gods.

Where the mysterious light came from that fell on the altar was beyond Harry's guessing: there was no opening visible in wall or roof, the source of the effect was skilfully hidden. With bated breath and quiet step, as though he were in the abode of the dead, as probably he was, Harry left the chapel and picked his way along another passage, still upward as if ascending by an everlasting zigzag. Harry now noticed that the length of the passages was diminishing, the angles becoming more frequent, till each section of the passage was but four or five paces in length. Gradually a light came stealing in, and he knew that he was nearing the top. Another angle turned and he emerged on an extensive platform, with the blue sky overhead. As he stepped out, a rushing sound made him start back in alarm. It was only the whirring wings of a colony of pigeons that had settled on the roof among potsherds, rubbish, and dust: they circled round his head, and swept away, glistening like gold in the sun.

Harry stood on the top of one of the northern towers of the temple, and from this great height gazed over a stretch of country—rock, river, and desert; to the west, the wild, precipitous range under which the temple stood, and which, high as he was, still shut out the view like a wall. All other aspects were open till lost in the dim line where desert touched the sky. Beneath lay the tiny oasis, the thin streak of the creek and the broad Nile in middle distance, shining smooth as glass, except where the surface was ruffled at the Cataract. Beyond stretched the great Nubian Desert.

Elation at his discovery would not allow Harry to linger; he must hasten to the camp with the news of what he had achieved, and he now found that in his excitement he had forgotten to blow out the candle, and it was fast guttering down in the draught. He had no relish for those inky passages without a light, and made a hurried descent.

(Continued on page 210.)



"In an hour's time he made a hole big enough to admit his body."



“The Professor prying into every corner and making entries in his note-book.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 207.)

IT was mid-day when Harry burst into the camp with the news. Uncle Charlie was dozing over a piece of paper, and the stump of pencil had fallen from his fingers. Selim was engaged on his water-works, and Dick was idly looking on. A shout, like the wild war-whoop of an Indian, brought their heads up and their backs straight.

'Come and see what I have found at the temple!' shouted Harry, his cheeks aglow.

'What?' said the Professor, with languid interest, when he saw that the Dervishes were not upon them, and that it was only Harry.

'The recess in the dark-room, where I kept my chemicals. I thought it must be the gateway that had been walled-up. I've broken through—come and see.' Harry was panting with excitement, and to adequately describe his discovery he felt was beyond him.

'Which side of the dark-room have you broken through?' asked the Professor.

'The right-hand side as you go in,' was the reply; 'and there's a way up on to the top of the tower. But it's awfully dark; we'd better take some more candles.'

'Wait a minute,' cried Uncle Charlie, now thoroughly roused and rivalling Harry in his excitement, as he ran to his box and drew out a piece of tarred rope to use as a torch.

'Come on!' he shouted, and with long strides he started across the sands. The sun was broiling, but he kept on at a rapid pace, though he puffed with the exertion and the perspiration trickled down his nose. At the temple Harry proudly led the way. They squeezed through the opening, regardless of dust and rubbish, and stood in the lofty hall; the Professor frayed the end of his torch and lit it at Harry's candle until it spread into a big blaze; then, to the mortification of Harry, who was directing his attention to the zigzag passage, he absolutely took no notice, but dashed to one side over blocks of fallen stone, and raising aloft his flambeau, paused and surveyed the north wall—a long penetrating scrutiny from side to side, above, below; then he shouted, "Yes! yes! there has been a gateway here." He turned, smiling triumphantly at the boys and repeating with emphasis—"There has been a gateway here. Now this tallies exactly with the description of the Scribe. See how those stones run to form the rectangular gateway. See the bevelled edges. See, the masonry with which the entrance has been filled in is decidedly sharper and the cement is more perfect. This spacious hall in which we now stand is between the two northern towers. The gateway I have just now pointed out led into this hall, or probably right through it into the courts of the temple, and I have little doubt that we shall find evidence of this on the opposite wall." They turned in that direction, and after a brief examination the Professor was able to point out that his surmise was correct. In the glare of the torch the Professor's face glowed with excitement and triumph as he waved the flambeau aloft with dramatic effects, regardless of the flakes of fire that fell upon himself and the boys, and summed up with the words, 'The Scribe's chamber is in

one of the two towers that stand on our right and left. That is my firm conviction.'

Harry, who had patiently entered into all this, and now saw clearly that, though unnoticed by him, it was really the most important part of his discovery, conducted his three companions—for it may be readily surmised that Selim had not allowed himself to be left out of this expedition—to the ascending passage, and was much gratified at their exclamations of interest and wonder. They had already expressed their astonishment at the effect produced by the circular opening high up in the wall of the hall, and, as they made the zigzag ascent, they were lost in admiration. The chapel with its peculiar illumination perplexed and fascinated them, and the Professor remained at least an hour in this place, prying into every corner and making entries in his note-book. Harry, warned by the experience of his former visit, was careful to extinguish his candle. Candles are scarce in the desert, and they would want all they had and more besides if they spent much time in these temple labyrinths. When the party emerged on the tower roof they looked around with delight, and Harry exultingly explained everything as if it were all his own personal property.

They sat on a heap of rubbish and took in the surrounding scene. The boys pointed out to one another the points of interest—Crocodile Creek, the Dismal Swamp, and a giant date-tree that stood near the camp. The tent was hidden by trees and bushes, but Selim said that he could see his kitchen, and even went so far as to assert that he could make out the water-channel he was constructing and Harry's hyæna-skin hanging over a pole, but Selim's powers of eyesight and imagination were so extended that it was difficult to know where they met.

Uncle Charlie sat basking in the sun and ruminating. At last he said, 'I should not wonder if there is another zigzag ascent to the tower opposite. We must look into that: there's as much likelihood of the Scribe's chamber being in the one tower as in the other. There's another point—we must carefully examine the walls of the passages to see if there are any signs of there ever having been an opening from them. There's nothing in the chapel, as you call it: I noticed that. The Scribe expressly states that there was no means of entry to his prison but the opening in the outward face of the wall. It is more probable that there had been some means of communication from within, that had been bricked up, and of which, of course, he had no knowledge; and probably there was some loophole of inspection unknown to him. Yes, we'll have a good look at the walls of the passage as we go down. How many candles have you got, Harry?'

Accordingly, as they descended, they examined every crack in the walls of the passage, two on each side with a candle between them, but found nothing to show that there had ever been a doorway or opening of any kind.

'Now for the other tower,' said Uncle Charlie. They crossed the intervening space of the great hall and found, as the Professor had expected, another passage made on the same ascending zigzag plan. 'This tower,' remarked the Professor, 'appears on the outside to be in a much more ruined condition than the first. I wonder if we shall find it so inside.' It proved to be so. The floor especially was much broken and littered with fragments over which they stumbled, their eyes being fixed on the walls more than on their footing.

They found the remains of a similar chapel, but it was a hopeless ruin, and so on to the top. There were many crevices and holes from which stones had fallen, but these were all shallow, and afforded no evidence that there was anything but solid masonry. The roof was the exact counterpart of that of the other tower, but more dilapidated, the coping having entirely disappeared and the stonework broken down at one corner.

'Just one more thing, before we go,' said Uncle Charlie, mopping his forehead and dusting down the knees of his trousers. 'I want to have another good look at the outside of the towers.' The Professor stood surveying the blank walls of the north front of the temple with bent brows, first with his arms folded across his chest and then with his hands clasped behind his back like Napoleon at St. Helena, but nothing seemed to come of it. Then he turned homeward saying, 'You have done well, Harry. You deserve a vote of thanks from the members of this expedition.'

(Continued on page 222.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

7. — ACROSTIC.

A name both by a king and peasant worn,
And one by a great priestly leader borne;
A name used often by a crowned queen,
The same, spelt differently, may come between;
A name in English history's early date,
Repeated with true majesty of late;
A mighty ruler in a northern clime;
A saint who died with fortitude sublime.

The whole, an author whose creations live,
And pleasure to uncounted readers give.

(Answer on page 251.)

C. J. B.

ANSWERS TO SINGLE ACROSTICS ON PAGE 179.

- (i.) *Peter*.—Paley, Emerson, Thackeray, Evelyn, Ruskin.
(ii.) *Robert* (Robert, Duke of Normandy, Robert Burns, Robert Southey, Robert Browning).—Rose, Orange, Bread, Eel, Rat, Tennis.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

THE Centipede was fond of work,
No task did he refuse,
'Twas his delight to sole and heel
His neighbours' boots and shoes.
He patched them very neatly too,
And made them nearly good as new.

He never grumbled in the least
When they were out at toes
(And centipedes have many feet,
As everybody knows!)
The boots and shoes upon the shelf,
He mended every one himself.

No matter what he had to do,
He did his very best;
He cobbled all the long day through,
Then took his hard-earned rest.
Remember Mr. Centipede,
And do your work with care and speed.

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

VII.—THE EDELWEISS AND ALPENROSE OF SWITZERLAND.

MOST of the National Flowers of which I have written so far have been what we might call flowers of war; that is, they have been adopted as badges in time of war: this was the case of the English Rose, the Scotch Thistle, the Welsh Leek or Daffodil, and the French Fleur-de-Lys; and thus they have come to be included in the heraldry of their country. But this is not the case with the national flowers of Switzerland. It is true that you will find them introduced into decorative wreaths, and so on, around the coats-of-arms of towns or cantons; but they neither of them have any direct connection with the arms, and are therefore entirely a decorative addition and have no historic importance.

They are national or typical in the sense that they are not found *wild* in most countries or many others, but they *are* found in other countries of a similar climate. For instance, the Edelweiss grows in the Austrian Tyrol, the Pyrenees and the Carpathians, and also in the great Himalayas of India; and varieties grow in Japan and parts of Australia. You will, I am sure, notice that all the districts I have named are mountainous, and it is therefore clear that these plants love a great height. But I must here point out that, with care, a sandy soil, and a sunny position, Edelweiss can be grown in most places as a *plant of cultivation* (i.e., not a 'wild' plant). Last year I saw as fine specimens as any one would wish to see growing on an old wall (*planted* there, of course) in a rock garden in Wales. I have never seen the Alpenrose (the other national flower of Switzerland) in England, though no doubt it *is* grown.

The Edelweiss is the flower which seems to have first claim to notice, so let us consider it first. Now, why has it become a national or typical flower? I do not know whether you have noticed it, but it is a curious fact that a thing which is difficult to obtain is always greatly desired, and much prized when secured. Its beauty or utility does not count—its attraction is its scarcity. Well, the Edelweiss has a habit of growing chiefly up, up, up, among the rocks and ice of the mountains on the line of perpetual snow. Comparatively a few years ago (I mean eighty or a hundred) these lonely tracts were only visited by the chamois hunter and a few adventurous peasants, and so only rarely were specimens brought down to the valleys. These were therefore looked upon as proofs of the courage and valour of those who brought them down. A sprig of Edelweiss even now is a precious gift in the eyes of a Swiss maiden, and is always considered as a mark of the giver's devotion. Since the mountains have been so overrun by tourists from other countries, the Edelweiss stood a chance of being entirely uprooted; but the wise peasants, 'seeing money in it,' planted quantities in certain districts, and yearly sell great masses to the visitors. Many lives are even now lost by people trying to gather it from inaccessible spots. I should want to gather it myself, but I hope I should not risk my life for it.

It is very odd how the flower crops up in unexpected places; travellers have told me they have sought it for days, and then, just when they were not looking for it, it has appeared as though by magic on the edge of the

road, or almost under their feet in some unsuspected spot.

There are many songs and legends concerning this plant, the prettiest being to the effect that a Swiss maiden of wonderful beauty and nobility of character, dying young, was changed into an Edelweiss; and one poem on the subject ends:—

'To pluck the Edelweiss is to obtain
The noblest love that mortal man may gain,
Since 'tis the type of ideal womanhood,
Of all that is most pure, most beautiful, most good.'

Now let me describe it botanically. Its name, Edelweiss, is from two German words, *edel*, precious, and



1. A PLANT OF EDELWEISS IN BLOOM

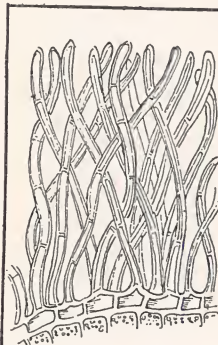
weiss, white. So the very name proclaims its worth. Its Latin name is *Leontopodium Alpinum* (the Alpine lion-foot plant); this refers to a supposed likeness of the flowers to a lion's paws! I must own I think they were hard up for a likeness when they chose that one! It is sometimes called moleskin plant on account of its very hairy surface, which is almost like fine fur; and another name is 'flannel flower,' which, personally, I think very good, for it really, leaves and flower, looks artificial and cut out of pieces of whitish flannel. And, again, the French call it cotton plant, which is also good.

Fig. 1 is a drawing of a little plant; see how 'fuzzy' it looks. The whole plant is covered with a thick layer of hairs, so that it is almost like felt. People describe the plant as *white*, but it is only the hairs that make it look white. They are composed of strings of transparent cells filled with air. Fig. 2 shows you a few hairs *very* much enlarged. If you shaved those hairs off you would find the leaves and stalks green, but rather sickly-looking because the light has been kept from them. The leaves grow in rosettes, and a single stem rises from the middle which carries the 'flower.' These flowers are not *single* flowers, each on a stem, as they appear; they are compound, very much compound! You remember how I described the thistle (see page 44); the Edelweiss is arranged in something the same way—it is *several* (generally six) clusters of yellowish flowers (or florets, to be correct), grouped together on top of a stem and surrounded by about five or six woolly leaves which are really 'bracts.' The whole 'flower' (or group of flowers) is woolly.

Now what is the use or object of this wool? You know that Mother Nature always has a meaning for these

odd ways of plants. I will try to explain it without using any long words. You see the Edelweiss always grows in positions where there is a great scarcity of moisture; it can live with very little, or it would not grow at all in such a position; but it must keep most of what it gets. Now, when the sun shines on plants, they are in the habit of giving up much of their moisture, and when there is plenty of moisture this process is good for the plant and more can easily be obtained. The green parts of a plant give up this moisture; so to prevent the Edelweiss from giving it all, Mother Nature has covered the plant with this thick layer of wool, and the light cannot penetrate it and draw away the moisture.

I must not close this article without some little account of the other national flower, the Alpenrose. It is not a rose at all, but a tiny rhododendron. It is an evergreen shrub which grows in great quantities in the mountains. There are two varieties, but they often get crossed (that is, the pollen from one variety reaches the pistils of the other), and show a likeness to both. Fig. 3 gives an idea what it is like. You see it is simply a small-flowered rhododendron. By-the-way, the meaning



2. ENLARGED HAIRS OF EDELWEISS



3. A SPRAY OF ALPENROSE

of the word rhododendron is really 'rose-tree,' so that is how we get the name 'Alpenrose.' This plant also holds on to its moisture, but is not woolly by any means. On the backs of the leaves are tiny little discs which prevent the flow of water. Another queer thing about the plant is that it is very frequently attacked by galls, which cause the flowers to double, and, sometimes, quite little 'apples' form on the leaves. E. M. BARLOW.

THE FAIRY FLOWER.

A FAIRY o'er my garden sailed,
And down a seed he threw:
I wonder, will it grow one day?
I wish, I wish I knew.

He floated on a fleecy cloud,
He peeped at me so gaily;
And then he dropped the tiny seed
That I am watering daily.

In April, when the thrushes sing
And silvery woods are gleaming,
I'll find a fairy flower, my dear,
Beyond my sweetest dreaming.



“‘Don’t you dare to get up!’ whispered Phil.”

‘HANDS UP!’

CHARLIE WRAY sat up in bed with his heart beating heavily.

‘Phil!’ he said, shaking his brother, ‘wake up! I’m sure there’s some one getting in at the study window.’

Phil came back from a land where, thanks to the last book he had been reading, he had been a rancher, scouring the country on horseback, holding up cat-lestealers with a deadly six-shooter, and saving distressed damsels from dire perils.

‘Eh? what?’ he grunted.

'I'm sure some one's getting in at the study window,' Charlie repeated. 'What shall we do?'

'Tell Father,' said Phil, skipping out of bed and slipping into his clothes.

'He hasn't come in,' replied his brother, following his example. 'The clock has just struck one, and he said he couldn't be in before half-past.'

Phil was about to whistle, but thought better of it. Then, with the courage of his dream strong upon him, remarked, 'I'm going down. He's not going to break open Father's safe if I can help it. Back me up, old man.'

Each boy picked up a weapon. Phil took a hockey-stick and Charlie a bat, and thus armed they crept down the staircase.

'If only we'd got Tiger I wouldn't mind,' whispered Phil. 'What a pity he was chained in the kennel last night!'

Their bare feet made no sound as they crossed the darkened hall to the study. Phil applied his eye to the keyhole. At the opposite side of the room he could dimly see a kneeling figure and the rays from a dark lantern. His heart thumped as he noiselessly pushed open the door, and, with Charlie pressing close behind him, insinuated half his person into the room. Then, drawing his hand from his pocket with something small and bright in it, he levelled it at the burglar, saying sharply, 'Hands up!'

The kneeling man, taken utterly by surprise, obeyed, and turning his head, attempted to rise.

'Stay where you are! Don't you dare to get up!' whispered Phil, threateningly, fearing if he spoke aloud the shakiness of his voice would be apparent. A stray shaft of moonlight shot across the room, showing the firm hand grasping the murderous-looking little weapon.

'Put that thing down,' whimpered the man. 'I don't know what your father is thinking of to let a kid like you have a plaything of that sort.'

Phil's breath was coming short. In his dreams he had tackled half-a-dozen thieves and come out on top; in reality he found one more than sufficient, and his nerve was giving way.

At this point there came a familiar snuffle and snore—the snuffle and snore of a bull-dog. His vanishing courage returned. With Tiger to back them up—Tiger, with the reputation that when once he took hold in anger he never left go—things assumed a very different aspect.

'Hold his collar, Charlie,' he said quickly, 'till I give the word.'

Charlie was already kneeling down, saying, 'Quiet, Tiger! Down, old chap!' But the snuffle and snore, interspersed with fierce growls, grew more aggressive.

The burglar was reduced to pleading. 'Look here, young sir, let me go. I haven't taken anything. I ain't had time.'

Phil took no heed, but stiffened his muscles. Minute after minute passed, broken only by Tiger's comforting breathing, till there came the sound of a key being fitted into the latch.

'There's Father!' said Charlie, springing joyously to his feet.

For one second Phil turned his head with a sigh of relief. That second was enough. The burglar also sprang to his feet, rushed across the room, and leapt through the open window.

Mr. Wray switched on the light. 'Hallo, boys! what's up?'

The strain over, Phil collapsed on to a chair with shaking knees, and Charlie told the tale.

'We were in bed, Father, and I woke and heard some one getting in at the study window.'

Mr. Wray crossed the room quickly, looked at the scattered tools, and hurriedly tried the safe door with a fervent 'Thank goodness! All right!'—while Charlie continued:

'And Phil said we must come down, and—and I was awfully frightened, but I had to back him up, and when we got to the door Phil suddenly pulled your pistol out of his pocket and said "Hands up!" and the man—'

'My pistol!' interrupted Mr. Wray, startled. 'Phil, how was it that you had it? I told you boys that neither of you was ever to touch it.'

Phil broke into a nervous laugh. 'It isn't yours, Father.' He flung the weapon on to the table. 'I bought it for Teddie's birthday to-morrow.'

Mr. Wray picked it up, stripped off the silver paper, and ejaculated, 'Chocolate!'

Charlie gazed blankly at his brother, while his father burst into a roar of laughter.

When he had calmed down he said, 'It was awfully risky, my boy. Suppose the man had taken his chance and rushed at you?'

'I thought of that, Father,' replied Phil, 'and I was in an awful funk till I heard old Tiger at my heels, and then I knew we were safe. By the way, how did he get in, and where's he gone? Tiger! Tiger, old chap!' he called, lifting the edge of the table-cloth and peering underneath. But no Tiger appeared. 'What's become of him?' he said, puzzled.

'It—it wasn't Tiger,' said Charlie, looking rather red. 'I—I snuffled.'

'You *what*?' asked Mr. Wray.

'I snuffled, Father. I could feel old Phil was a bit shaky, and I thought it would buck him up if he thought Tiger was here, so I—I snuffled,' he repeated for the third time.

It was Phil's turn to stare, while Mr. Wray collapsed on to a chair and gazed at his two sons. 'Well, you *are* a couple!' he said at last. 'To hold up a burglar with a chocolate pistol and an imitation bull-dog!' Then he went off into another fit of laughter, in which both boys joined.

'I say, boys,' he said at length when he had recovered, 'look at the time! Be off! I'll lock up.'

They were sitting up in bed when he went into their room. 'Good-night, my rancher! good-night, my bull-dog!' he said. 'Thank God, you're both safe. I'm proud of you.' He went away still chuckling.

Meanwhile a disconsolate burglar slowly padded back to his den minus a valuable set of tools and a dark lantern, but thanking his stars that he had not a bullet in him, nor yet had been mauled by a bull-dog!

C. E. THONGER.

TEE-HEE

The True Story of a Swan.

THE King was coming! At Kelston College every one was as busy as he or she could possibly be, for there was a great deal to be done before all was in perfect order. Carts were going backwards and forwards, bringing all sorts of provisions; gardeners were

sweeping for the last time the already trim paths, or helping to unload the huge vans of palms and flowers which were to brighten up the rooms and corridors. Other men were putting down rolls of crimson felt carpet and hanging up flags and bunting.

The College boys were rushing to and fro, feeling very excited at the prospect of seeing 'their people' again. Especially important were the members of the Cadet Corps, who, in all the glory of their khaki uniforms, were having a final rehearsal of the march out from the great entrance, and the lining up of the route along which the King would drive on his way from Kelston Station to the College.

It was Speech Day, and the Kelstonians were as proud as proud could be, for the King himself had consented to give away the prizes; the day was as glorious as an English July day can be at its best—and what more could the boys possibly desire?

But Tee-hee, the swan down on the big lake, knew little about Kings, and cared still less if the truth be told. No; his thoughts were dwelling on quite a different subject as he sailed in his majestic and stately way across the huge stretch of water, in which the tall dark pines, green oaks, and silver birch-trees, and the clumps of purple loose-strife were reflected as in a mirror. He was *hungry*, there was no doubt about it, and could it be possible that he was forgotten? He ruffled up all his lovely white feathers and gave a hiss of annoyance at the very idea.

He—Tee-hee—the spoilt pet of all the College boys: teased he might sometimes have been, yes, but he knew very well how to prevent teasing going too far—but forgotten—neglected—he had never been before!

Every day as long as he could remember, John, the old factotum at the College, had come down to the lake bringing Tee-hee's daily meal in a large tin: to say nothing of biscuits and broken bread which little Ellie brought to feed her pet.

But there was no doubt at all about it, it was getting late, and he was as hungry as an empty inside could make any bird: and neither John, Ellie, or the boys were even in sight!

What could he do? He stretched up his long neck and looked around. Yes, he knew that John always came down that particular path, so why should he not go and see what had happened to John, or, more important still, what had become of his tin of food?

Out he got from the water, gave himself one or two angry shakes, stretching out his long white wings to their fullest extent and craning his elegant neck to its greatest length, then off he started.

At first he had all the path to himself, but as he got nearer the College, he saw that he was not going to escape unnoticed. One or two boys wandering aimlessly about had caught sight of him. 'By Jove, there's old Tee-hee!' one of them exclaimed; 'what on earth is he after? Let's watch him.' 'Let him alone,' said another. 'Go it, old boy. How many strides to the mile? Who is your drilling sergeant?' Pity he can't teach you to walk better,' called out one boy or another, as they joined in following him.

Tee-hee didn't understand what they were talking about, and once fairly on his way he meant to go on—besides, although a very delicious savoury smell was filling the air, and he was indignant at the boys hurrying him on so fast, yet he was such a greedy bird that he felt he could not, and would not, turn back until he

had found *where* that smell of food came from: for Tee-hee had noticed the odours of hot cakes, hot buns, new bread and rolls—for the baker's cart which had just passed by had been literally over-loaded with freshly baked provisions.

In the huge College kitchen the cooks were, as they expressed it, 'up to their eyes in work'—roast meat, game, pigeon, veal and ham pies, roast pork, boiled hams and tongues; puddings and pies, jellies and creams by the hundred were being prepared.

For all the fathers, mothers, sisters, cousins, and aunts of all the College boys meant many hundreds to feed, so the kitchen was a scene of great bustle and hurry.

All of a sudden a 'Siss-ssh-ss-sssh!' made every one turn to the kitchen door.

'Bless my soul! just look there,' called out old John, as he almost let fall a pile of plates. 'Here's Tee-hee come to fetch his dinner himself!'

A shout of laughter greeted this remark of John's, and poor Tee-hee might have been laughed at and no more, had not Mary Ann bustled forward, saying:

'Well, now the poor beast has come, we'd better give him something for his trouble.'

No sooner said than done—each one began to throw bits of pastry, tarts which were a little too broken or burnt to be sent in to the tables, bits of cake or buns, in fact anything which came handy, and Tee-hee, who, as I said, was very greedy, literally gobbled it all up, feeling that never in his life had he had such a feast.

But there were more important things to be attended to, and kitchen and scullery maids were soon called back to their duties by the head cook, and so Tee-hee, finding there was no more to be had, strolled leisurely back to the lake.

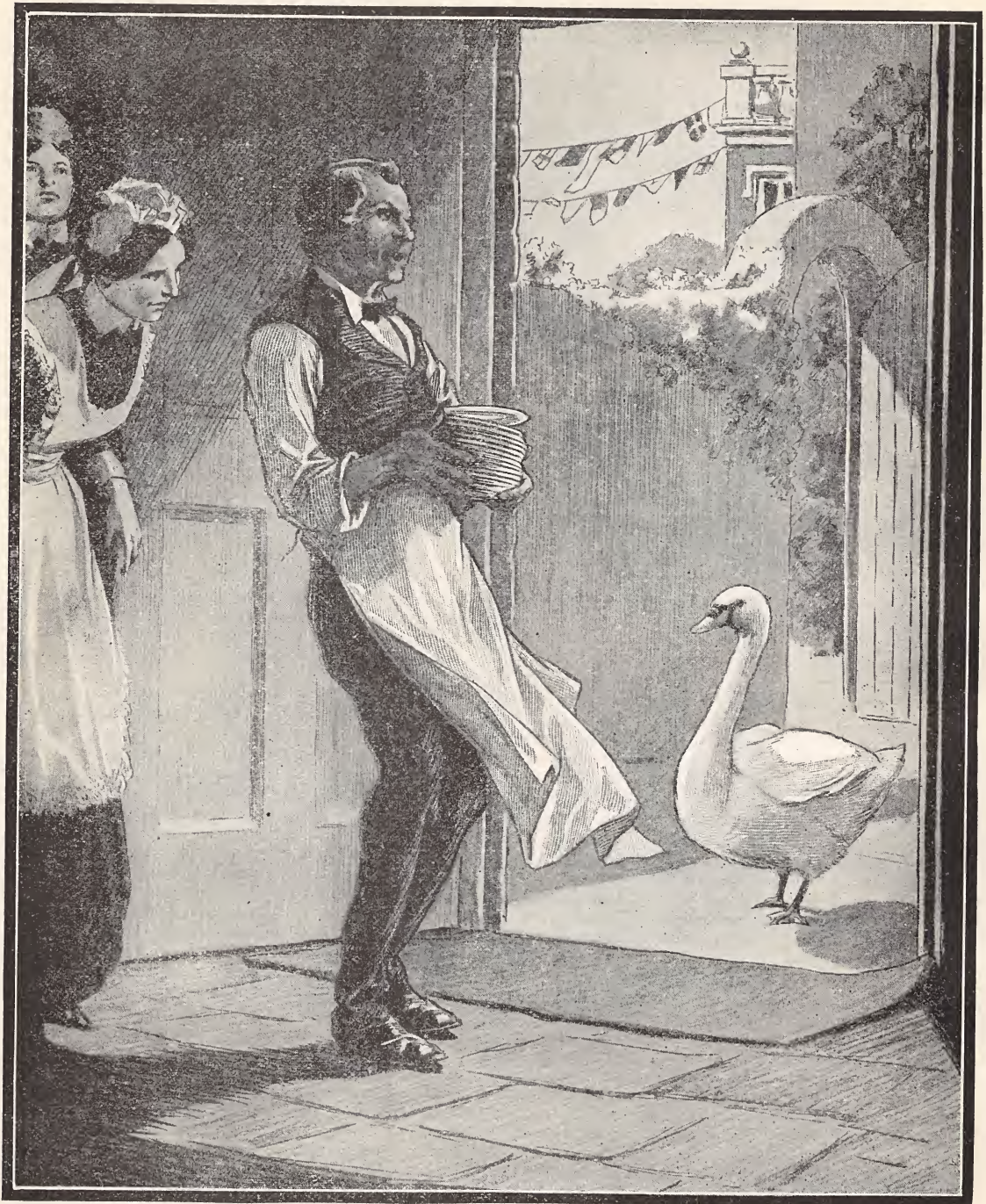
After this first adventure, he was often to be seen wandering along the paths or roads into the College grounds, and many a bit of bun or cake was thrown to him by some good-natured boy returning from a visit to the tuck-shop; but never again did he get such a feast as on the day of the King's visit.

But at last a dreadfully sad thing happened. Old Tee-hee was wandering along the main road leading from the College to the lake, when 'ting, ting, ting,' went the bell of a bicycle coming swiftly along the road. Tee-hee began to run, thinking only how to get away from the horrid thing, and he never saw or heard the milk-cart coming in the other direction, and before the driver could pull up, the horse had knocked Tee-hee down and one of the wheels had passed over his beautiful neck. Nothing could be done—Tee-hee was dead!

A crowd of boys soon assembled, you may be sure; many were the words of regret and sorrow, for poor old Tee-hee was a great favourite, and the big boys even pretended not to notice when they heard a suspicious snuffle and a smothered sound which ended with a violent blowing of the nose on the part of some little boy who was trying hard *not* to cry. The Head Master was of course told, and he said, 'The best thing to do is to have him stuffed, for he is really a beautiful bird, and we will put him in the College Museum.'

If you ever go to Kelston College, the first thing you will notice in the museum is a big glass case with a lovely white swan sailing on an artificial lake of blue-green glass with a background of rushes.

It is Tee-hee.



“ ‘Here’s Tee-hee come to fetch his dinner himself!’ ”



"She implored the French king, on her knees, to have mercy."

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

VI.—TOURNAI.

MANY of the old cities of Belgium have had strange and eventful histories, but perhaps Tournai, which lies in Hainault, near the French frontier, has had the most romantic story of them all.

The town's adventures began in 1341, when it was in the hands of the French, and when, as the historian Froissart relates, Edward III., the King of England, besieged Tournai 'with great puissance.'

England and France were at war together during this period, and Edward had plenty of allies, for we read that in his army, besides sixty thousand Flemings, under Jacques van Artevelde, there were men from Holland, Hainault, and Brabant, and many 'Almains,' or, as we should call them nowadays, Germans.

This great host advanced upon Tournai from Ghent, in the late summer, and soon the town was invested so closely that no reinforcements or provisions could be brought into the city, and the inhabitants were imprisoned within the walls.

Great preparations had been made beforehand for the siege, and Froissart tells us that large quantities of victuals, besides ammunition, had been laid in, but these proved insufficient, and before long the poorest people of the town, who had no stores, were turned out of the gates. This happened in broad daylight; but the fugitives were very kindly treated by their enemies, and the Duke of Brabant caused them to be escorted safely to Arras, where a great French army had assembled and was awaiting an opportunity to relieve the beleaguered city.

The siege went on for nearly three months, and by that time, although little actual damage had been done to Tournai itself, the inhabitants were starving. It was then that Joan of Valois, a brave and kind-hearted princess, determined to do what she could to bring the siege to an end, and as she was not only the sister of the King of France, but also the mother of the Duke of Hainault, she had friends in both camps. At first all her efforts were in vain, but finally, after she had implored the French king, on her knees, to have mercy, a truce was arranged. The leaders of the two armies met at a little chapel in a field near Tournai, and at last Joan's pleadings prevailed. The siege was raised, and Edward III. departed with a very bad grace to Ghent.

The story of the second great siege is even more romantic, and strangely enough, this time, too, the chief part in the drama is taken by a woman.

It was in 1581 that a great Spanish army under Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, advanced upon Tournai, and as the governor of the city, the Prince d'Epinoy, was away with most of his soldiers, the defence was undertaken by his wife.

'The Princess performed all man-like exercises that her husband could have done, exhorted some, entreated other some, used sometimes threats. She herself did sometimes execute her own orders, and, in fine, omitted nothing which might make for the sustaining of the siege.'

It is a gallant picture that the old historian gives us, and its truth is proved by letters which are preserved among the English State Papers.

On October 12th, 1581, for instance, Lord Walsingham received a letter from a correspondent in Ghent, describing the siege. It contains these words: 'The Prince of Parma has summoned Tournai many times, and this week he summoned the Princess Epinoi, saying that if she would not cause the town to yield at his entry, he would no more spare her than any other, but would put her to the sword, together with all the rest of the town—man, woman, and child.'

The town called a general council, and said that to the last man they would never yield, and so sent him defiance. The Princess asked leave to send a message herself. She sent word to Parma that 'She thought him of more valiantness than to summon a woman, and though the Prince of Epinoi was out of the town with his best captains and soldiers, he would find those within it as should withstand all his cowardly enterprises.'

Many terrible assaults were made upon the walls of Tournai town, and in one of these the Princess was wounded. It was small wonder, for she did not hesitate to risk her life, and always threw herself where the danger was greatest. 'Am I not here myself?' she said; 'do I not represent the Prince, my husband? I am no less ready than he to despise death, that I may be serviceable to the country, as we all should.'

With such a leader it is not surprising to find that the little garrison defended the town with wonderful bravery, and in one fierce assault the enemy was beaten back with such fury that in retiring he left ten or twelve standards on the walls.

And so the siege went on, through the long damp autumn months, until food became very scarce, and still no army came to relieve the sorely pressed city. The inhabitants began to despair at last, and it was decided that surrender was necessary. Even then the brave Princess d'Epinoy did not desert her followers, but, in order to save Tournai from pillage and bloodshed, she herself carried on negotiations with the enemy and procured good terms.

The lives of the citizens were spared, the troops were allowed to march out with their arms, and she herself, when she passed through Parma's camp on her way to join her husband, was received with great honour, and treated, we are told, 'not as conquered, but as a conqueress.'

Another great siege took place in 1667, the French, this time, being the enemy; and then, in 1709, Marlborough invested the city, and captured it after a terrible bombardment.

'Never was siege carried out with more difficulty than that of the citadel of Tournai,' an English writer says; and indeed, after their gallant deeds in the past, it was not likely that the citizens would yield easily, and we read of fierce sorties and of terrible losses among the allied troops. In the end, as had been the case so often before, the garrison was forced to surrender through lack of provisions, and on September 3rd, in the afternoon, a gate was opened and the town was given up to the enemy.

A. A. Methley, F.R.G.S.

MR. BUTT AND HIS BANK-NOTES.

ISAAC BUTT, a famous Irish orator, was very careless with his money. At the end of a trial held at Youghal, in which Butt had acted as 'counsel' to a Mr. Weguelin, a cheque for a large amount

—some hundreds of pounds—was handed to him. He took it at once to a bank, where he got it changed into bank-notes. Butt was staying at the house of a Youghal gentleman, and there was a great hullabaloo in that house the next morning, because for some time the notes could not be found. Just as the police were being sent for, the gentleman's young son discovered the guest's missing property. It had been a gusty night. A window of Butt's bedroom shook and rattled in its loose frame, and he, disturbed by the noise, got up to stop it. Seizing the papers nearest his hand, which happened to be the bank-notes, he thrust them in between the frame and the casement, then got into bed again, fell asleep, and forgot utterly what he had done!

TWO POINTS OF VIEW.

POOR old Mrs. Grumbles
Cannot stand the spring,
The east winds are trying,
And what dust they bring!
Summer makes her weary,
Autumn is too dreary,
Winter much too cold for anything!

But little Miss Merrythought
Loves the April weather,
The sunshine and raindrops
Coming both together.
Summer brings the roses,
Autumn flame-red posies,
Winter sets her dancing like a feather.

PIERRE AND MARIE.

PIERRE walked along the road whistling merrily, for this was a whole holiday, and he was going to have a fine time and do just as he liked. He was wondering if he should spend the morning down by the river, fishing, or up the hill, flying his kite, when he met his little friend Marie.

One glance showed him something was wrong, for Marie's eyes were swollen and she looked very miserable, and Pierre felt sorry. He had always liked Marie, ever since the day she had come to the village—a little orphan—to live with her aunt.

'Why do you look so sad?' he asked her: and after a little she told him her trouble.

Her big cousin Henri was a soldier, and he had been away for a long time. The next day her Aunt Mathilde was going to say good-bye to her son before he went off to fight, and Marie wanted so much to go too, but it was a long train journey and would cost too much.

'More than four whole francs, Pierre,' she told him: 'and the Aunt Mathilde has not that money to spend on me. And I was sad, for he is so good and kind, my cousin Henri, and I may never see him again. But I must try not to think of it any more—I did not know I looked sad. I must hurry, for we shall be busy to-day.' And she smiled bravely at Pierre, as she ran off.

Pierre stood for some time thinking, and then he walked slowly on, wondering if he could get the money for Marie. More than four francs! That was a great deal, but then he had all the day to himself and he might be able to earn it.

The miller was piling up the white floury sacks on

his cart, when Pierre came up and asked if he might work for him.

'No, no, mon petit!' said the miller kindly, 'you are too small—I have no work you could do.'

And it seemed the same thing wherever he went: the butcher, the blacksmith, the farmers—they all said he was too small!

'If only it were summer!' thought Pierre. 'They were glad enough to let me help with the hay then!' and he sat down on the wall near the river, feeling rather disheartened, for it was getting late and he had no money.

Old Mother Bouquin was hanging out clean clothes in her garden, and every now and then she would come to the little gate and look up and down the road, and seeing Pierre, she asked him if he knew where her boy Louis was.

'But yes!' Pierre answered, 'I saw him an hour ago: he was going to the woods.'

'And how does he think the washing is to be taken to the big house?' exclaimed the poor woman, 'and what shall I do if it is not?'

She gazed up the road again. 'Oh, dear—will he not come?' she said, looking so distracted that Pierre said suddenly, 'I will take it for you, Madame.'

It would not be helping Marie, but all the same he felt he must do it, for Madame Bouquin seemed so sad and worried.

'But it is a big parcel,' she told him.

'Oh, I can carry big ones,' said Pierre stoutly; 'you shall see. Please let me!' and a few minutes later he had started off, Madame shouting her thanks after him.

It was a long way, and Pierre had to rest many times, but at last he got to the Park and sat down on the short grass to get his breath again. And as he sat there, something bright caught his eye, and when he looked more closely, he saw it was a beautiful silver purse.

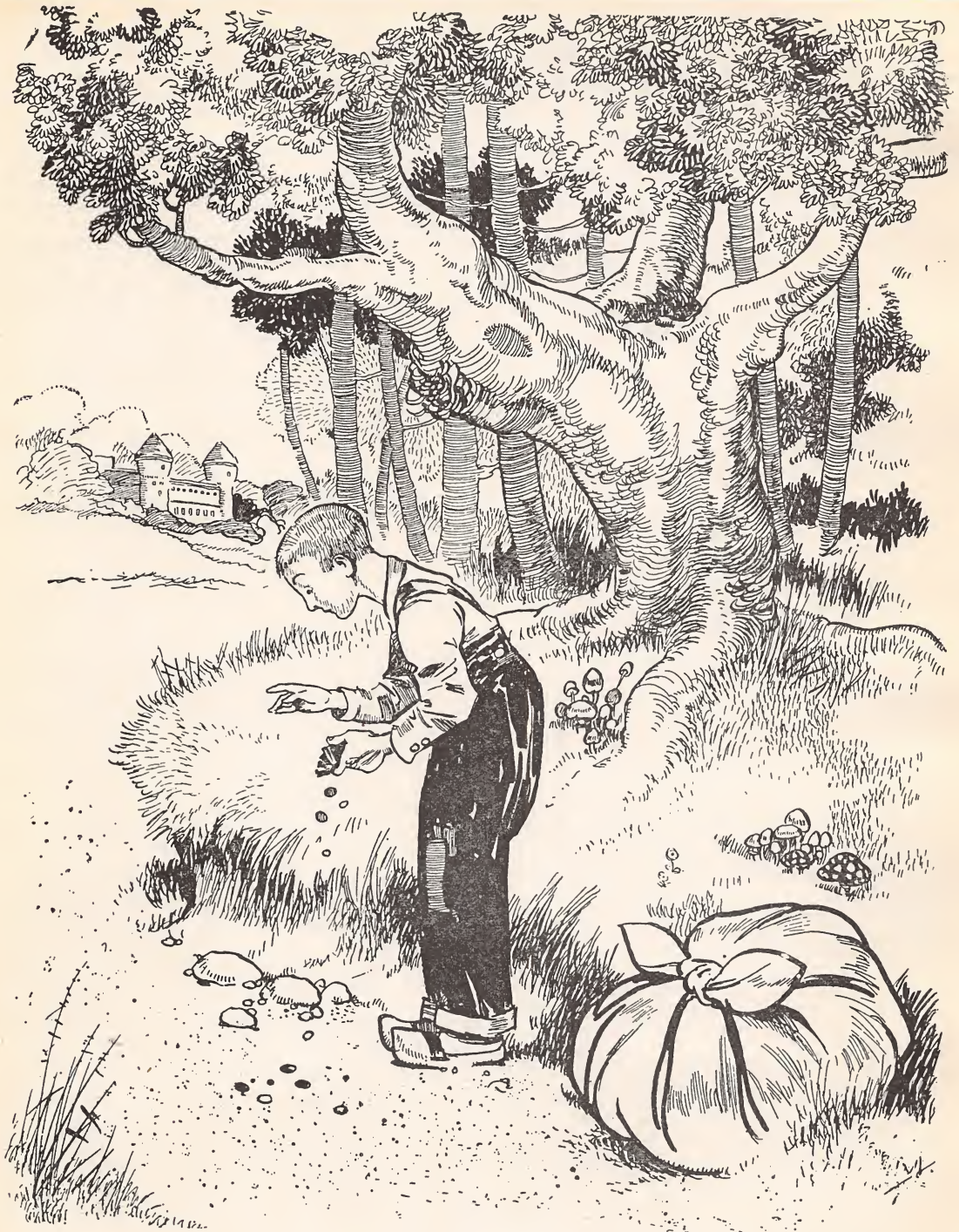
'It belongs to some one at the house,' thought Pierre. 'I must take it to them.'

He picked it up, and as he did so, ever so many coins fell out and rolled on to the ground. Pierre stared at them—suppose he took some, just enough to give to Marie—they would never be missed, and how lovely it would be to tell her she could go to see Henri. It was no good trying to earn any money—he had tried all day in vain. This was the easiest way. And then he felt his cheeks growing red. What was he thinking of? And what would Marie say if she thought he had stolen the money to give her? No, he must never do that—it would be much better for her not to go at all than that he should be a thief. He quickly picked up all the coins and put them back, and then, still feeling ashamed of the dreadful thought he had had, he set off again with the big bundle on his back and the purse held tightly in his hand.

He soon found, when he got to the house, that it belonged to Mademoiselle Blanche, and she was so grateful to Pierre that she gave him a beautiful shining five-franc piece; and back he ran to the village, as happy a boy as you could have found anywhere.

When Marie heard that the money was all for her, she could hardly believe it.

'Oh, Pierre, you are too, too kind!' she said, and the tears came into her eyes. 'I am so very happy



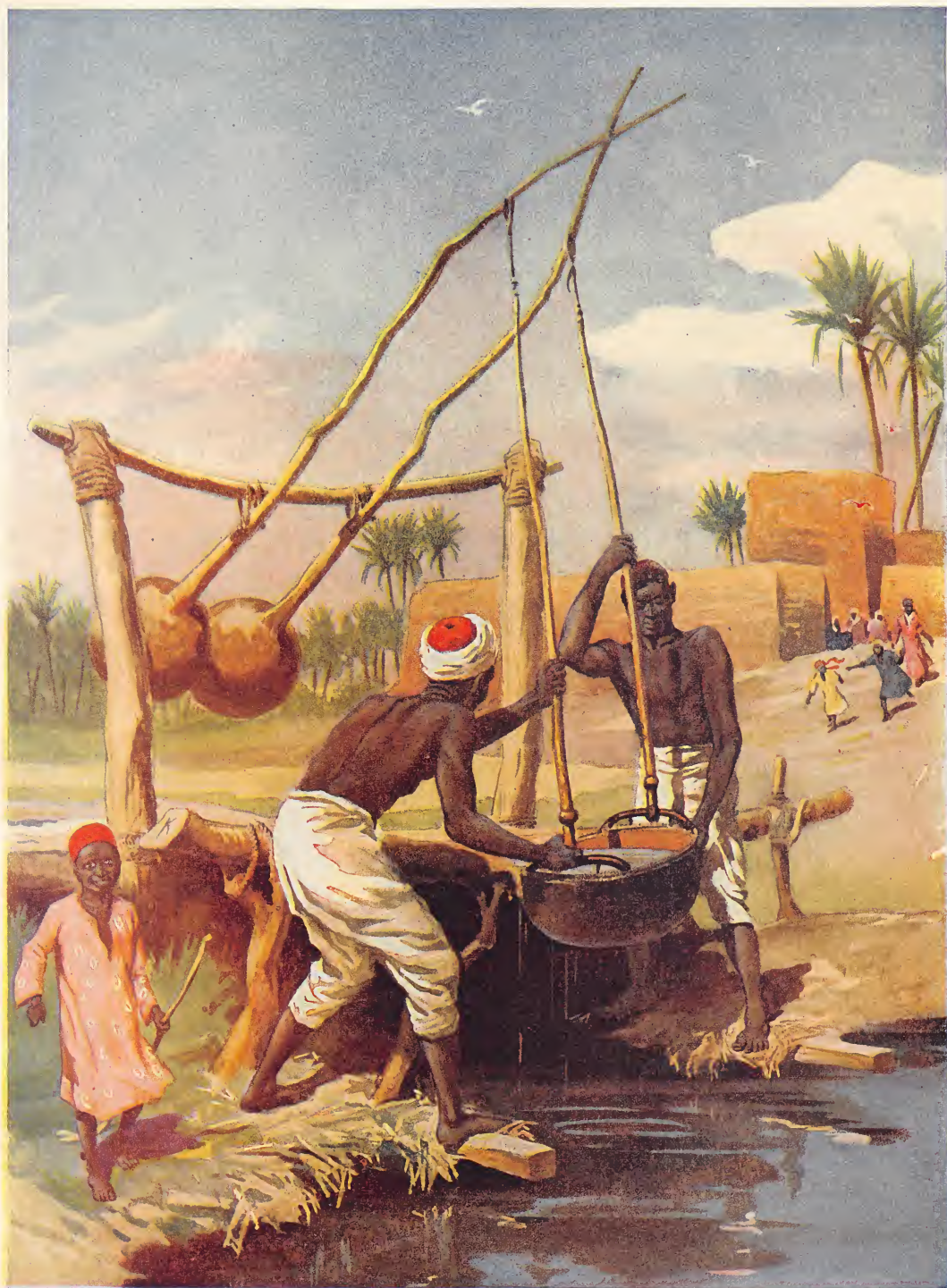
‘Ever so many coins fell out.’

now, and I will tell Henri, when I see him, how good you are to me. You are just the kindest boy I ever met!’

The next morning Pierre was at the station to see

Marie and her aunt off, and as the train started, her happy little face smiled out at him, and he felt every bit as glad as she did and stood waving his cap to her till she was out of sight.

Isabel Lade.



EGYPTIAN WATER WELL



"The Chamberlain took up the sugar-basin and threw it out."

OUT OF THE WINDOW.

WHEN General Fleury was Ambassador at St. Petersburg, one of the Russian Chamberlains tried to give him a little lesson in manners. As the sugar for the coffee was handed to him after dinner, the Ambassador took a lump with his fingers. Upon this the Chamberlain rose, and without a word took up the sugar-basin, went to the window, and threw it out.

General Fleury did not appear to notice his host's singular action; but, when he had finished his coffee, he too walked to the window. Out went cup, saucer, and spoon!

'Whatever are you doing?' exclaimed the Chamberlain, much aghast, for the china was extremely valuable.

The Ambassador smiled and bowed politely. 'But I thought this was the proper thing to do,' said he. 'Did you not, dear sir, throw out the sugar-basin but a moment ago?'

R. Bull.

ALL ABOUT SUGAR.

SUGAR can be got out of nearly all forms of vegetable growth, but the number of plants which store up enough of it to be of use to mankind is not large. To-day the greater part of the sugar used is obtained from the sugar-cane and the beet. But ages ago honey was the only sweet in common use. Though, while the Greeks and the Romans and other races had only honey, the Chinese were getting sugar from the bamboo, and the natives of India had also found that a sweet substance could be extracted from this cane. In these countries the sugar-cane is now preferred, because it contains a larger amount of the sweet. Then it was discovered in Western Asia that sugar could be made from raisins; and at the present time a large amount of this raisin sugar is sold by the makers in Syria, Asia Minor, and Turkey, to buyers in this and other countries.

But a more curious source of sugar than the raisin has been lately found in Queensland, where the cactus is being put to use for the production of the sweet. Two tons of cactus will yield as much sugar as three tons of sugar-cane. The cacti grow on desert lands, where no other forms of vegetation will flourish. For this reason, then, sugar-producing from the cactus is of great importance to all hot countries having great deserts.

In Japan, about two thousand years ago, they made a honey from the starch of barley, and called the product barley-sugar.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, the Crusaders returning from Palestine brought sugar to Western Europe. It was made in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates in sufficient quantities to become a trade. But as yet this sugar was only for the kings and great nobles, who indulged in it at their special feasts. The traders brought it to the eastern shore of the Adriatic in caravans. Thence it was shipped at Ragusa, and carried in vessels to Venice. There it was loaded into waggons to be taken across the roads of Northern Italy, and into the countries beyond.

Early in the thirteenth century the Knights of St. John introduced the sugar-cane into Malta and Sicily. The King of Portugal, going there soon afterwards, sent some cuttings of the cane to the Madeira and

the Canary Islands, where the sugar industry so flourished that the whole of Western Europe got its supplies from these islands for the next two centuries and more. From the Canaries, the Portuguese carried the cuttings of the sugar-cane to Brazil, their American colony, where sugar-making was established in the New World in the sixteenth century.

Sugar-cane growing was not introduced into North America until late in the seventeenth century. The Jesuit Fathers at San Domingo sent a band of missionaries to Louisiana, and with them cuttings of cane for planting, and skilled negroes to grow it and turn the juice of it into sugar. Out of this little beginning has grown the cane-sugar trade of the United States.

But cane-sugar is not the only sugar which can be used. Just as good sugar is made from beets, carrots, and turnips. It also is got from the Palmyra palm, and other trees of the palm genus. Then, too, very good sugar, though not half enough, is made from the sap of the Canadian maple-tree, first used by the American Indians, and very quickly adopted by the pioneers.

As early as 1747 the Berlin chemist, Margraf, prepared from the beet very excellent sugar; but it was not till 1802 that the first beet-sugar factory was started at Kunern, in Silesia. The beet industry owes a great deal to the lack of cane-sugar in Europe, owing to the supremacy of Britain on the seas during the Napoleonic wars. When Napoleon forbade almost all Europe to trade with Britain, the importation of sugar almost came to an end throughout the European Continent, for the trade of it was in the hands of the British, and so folk began to take to beet-sugar instead. Thus the beet-sugar industry was greatly hastened, and nowadays in Germany, Holland, and Belgium, it supplies more than two-thirds of the sugar used by the people.

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By William Rainey.

(Continued from page 211.)

CHAPTER XV.

THE next day the Professor made his appearance dressed for a journey. Now, Uncle Charlie in full travelling rig was a sight to behold—everything about him was big, at any rate in lateral dimensions: his enormous pith-helmet concealed his face almost to the point of his nose, and his bushy black beard bunched out fiercely beneath. The pockets of his white cotton-coat bulged with provisions and a cor-pulent note-book, and his trousers were big and baggy. The holster of his revolver was three sizes too big for the weapon, and hanging as it did a long way down from his loose belt, appeared bigger than it really was. A large pair of field-glasses was slung over one shoulder, and over the other hung the largest water-bottle that could be bought, and now in his hand he carried the biggest of big sticks. It was also remarkable, as if all these outward manifestations of the man in some way struck inward, his voice became much bigger and gruffer on these occasions.

'Boys!' he shouted, 'I'm going to inspect the other temple before beginning operations here.'

He alluded to the temple before-mentioned that lay some three miles to the south, under the same precipitous range of sandstone hills that overhung the other. 'If I don't turn up to-night, don't be alarmed. I'm going to thoroughly explore those ruins, and I shall not return till I have made up my mind on a certain very important point: so take care of yourselves and don't burn the tent down. If you want a job, you can investigate those passages of the temple again.'

This suggestion suited the boys exactly, and they started, Selim accompanying them. They examined the walls of the passages even more closely than before, but with no better result. Then Dick proposed a visit to the secret cavity in Pharaoh's throne which Abdulla had shown him. It was but a stone's throw to the rock temple, and in a few minutes they were in its gloom, picking their way among the stones and rubbish at the foot of the Colossus. Dick pressed firmly on the globe that rested on the sculptured hawk's head, saying in a tragic voice, 'Open, sesame.' The pillar revolved as before. 'Awfully queer, isn't it?' he remarked. They peered into the dark cavity.

'Looks like a tomb,' said Harry.

'And smells like one too,' was Dick's reply. 'Now, then, in you go; let's shut the door and see how it works.' Selim appeared reluctant. 'Jump in, Harry—stay a minute though. Let's look for the marks inside first—the hawk's head that opens it. I shouldn't like to get stuck in this hole, and not able to get out—the very thought of it makes you creep. Here they are—the hawk's head and the ball. Selim, you stop outside: if the thing doesn't work properly, and we can't get out, you've only got to press that ball down—do you see?'

Selim was himself again. Yes, he could see—he could see anything and everything but going inside that tomb.

The boys entered and revolved the pillar into its place—it was pitchy dark. 'Now, try if it works all right,' said Dick, in subdued tones. He pressed the inside globe. 'Yes, it works all right enough. Come on, Selim,' he cried, putting his head and shoulders out. 'Come on, you can come in now.'

Selim shook his head—a very serious expression on his face. 'I stop outside and keep guard with dis big stick,' he said, and marched up and down with military step.

Dick saw that nothing would induce the sentinel to quit his post, so he joined Harry within. They lit a candle and took stock of the place—it was about ten feet square, and would hold half-a-dozen people if they did not require to sit down: the roof was arched and fairly lofty; in fact, it formed the under surface of the throne on which the colossal figure was seated. There was nothing whatever inside with the exception of a large bronze ring let into the wall, which gave it the appearance of a prison. The fate of some poor wretch chained to the ring was not to be thought of. The boys shuddered, and Dick made haste to speak. 'The Sheikh—Abdulla, I mean—said that in case of danger we should take refuge here. It would be something pretty bad that would make any one come here; but you never know what you'll do if things come to the worst.'

'We should starve to death,' said Harry, aghast.

'That's a fact,' Dick replied. 'I've a notion that we ought to provision the place—what do you say, Harry? If we brought up a tin of biscuits, for in-

stance, and a couple of pots of marmalade, some bottles of water, and some of those dried dates Abdulla took with him, we could hold out for two or three days. What do you say?'

'Well,' replied Harry, 'if there's the ghost of a chance that we shall ever have to take refuge here, it's the proper thing to do.'

So it was decided to lay in a stock of provisions, and, moreover, to set about it at once.

'If we're going to do the thing, let's do it properly,' said Harry. 'Let's have the ship of the desert out and take a jolly good lot—a couple of tins of meat and some candles—candles above all things; I'd as soon be without food as without candles in that place, I can tell you.' So the ship of the desert bore a goodly cargo to the Rock Temple that evening.

The moon was well up before they got back to camp for the second time, and a very unpleasant surprise awaited them—the camp-kitchen was a wreck—saucepans were overturned, two pair of pigeons that Dick had shot and Selim plucked, and every other particle of food had disappeared, including their supper. Selim was furious. 'It's one of those beastly "henas!"' he cried. 'Him eat up everything; my leather belt gone too.'

Fortunately the larder had escaped. When the boys removed the ship of the desert from before it, they had made it doubly secure with two thick logs and a rock.

'I show him, I let him know,' cried Selim, excitedly. 'A nasty, thieving, great ugly beast. He eat his own grandmother. I let him know. I set a trap for him—I show him.'

Selim was as good as his word on this occasion, for after the work of clearing up the despoiled kitchen, which was enlivened with the choicest abuse his vocabulary furnished, he continued, 'You lend me 'fessor's gun, Mister Dick. I make trap—I blow him head off.'

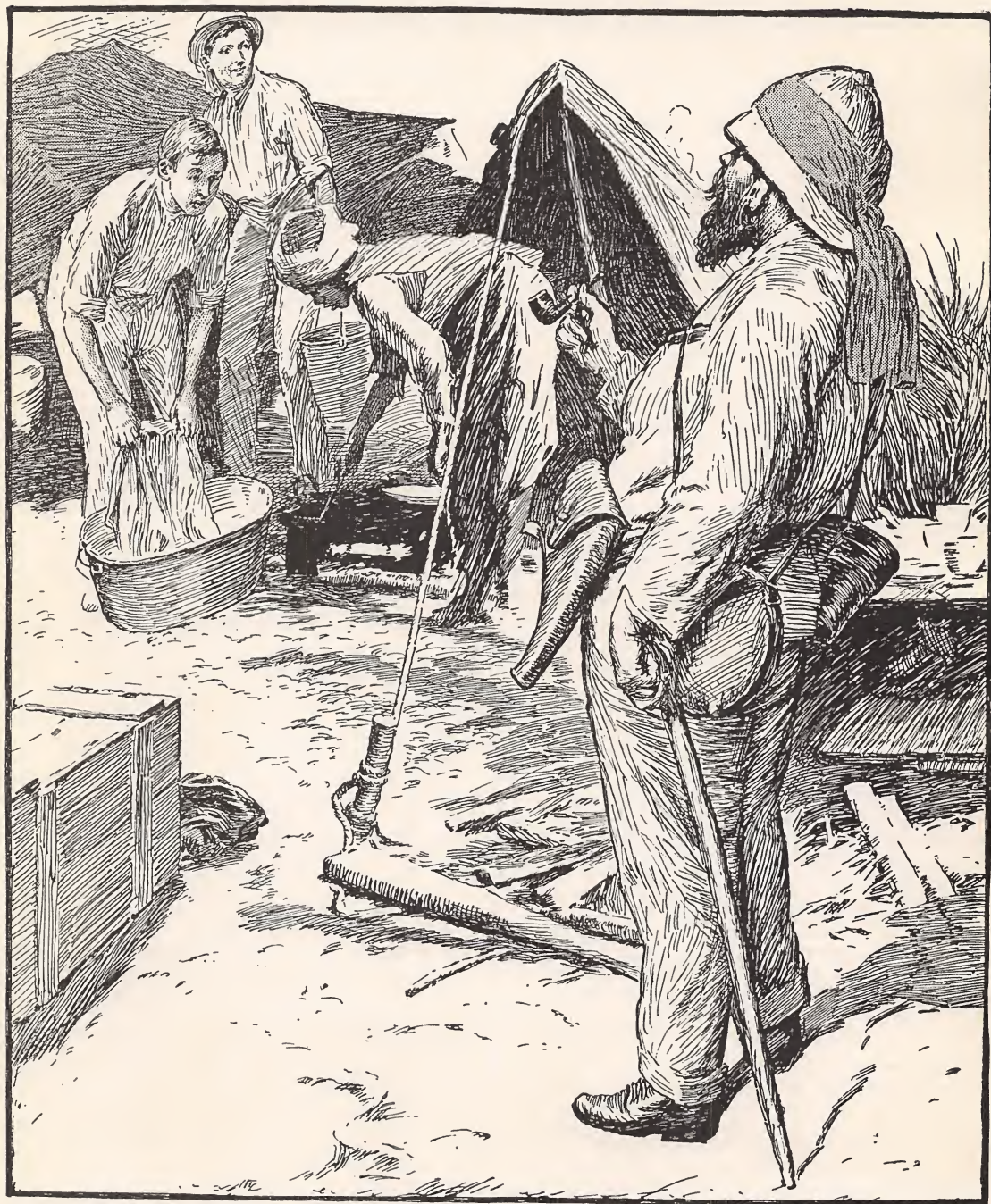
With some hesitation Dick lent him the gun, and between them, under Selim's directions, they constructed a deadly trap for the tiger-wolf, if, emboldened by his first visit, he should venture again. The gun was lashed securely to two uprights at the entrance of the rude tent which formed the kitchen, the barrel being sloped so that the muzzle would be about the height of the hyaena's head.

'What about the bait?' said Dick; 'he has eaten everything in the shape of meat.'

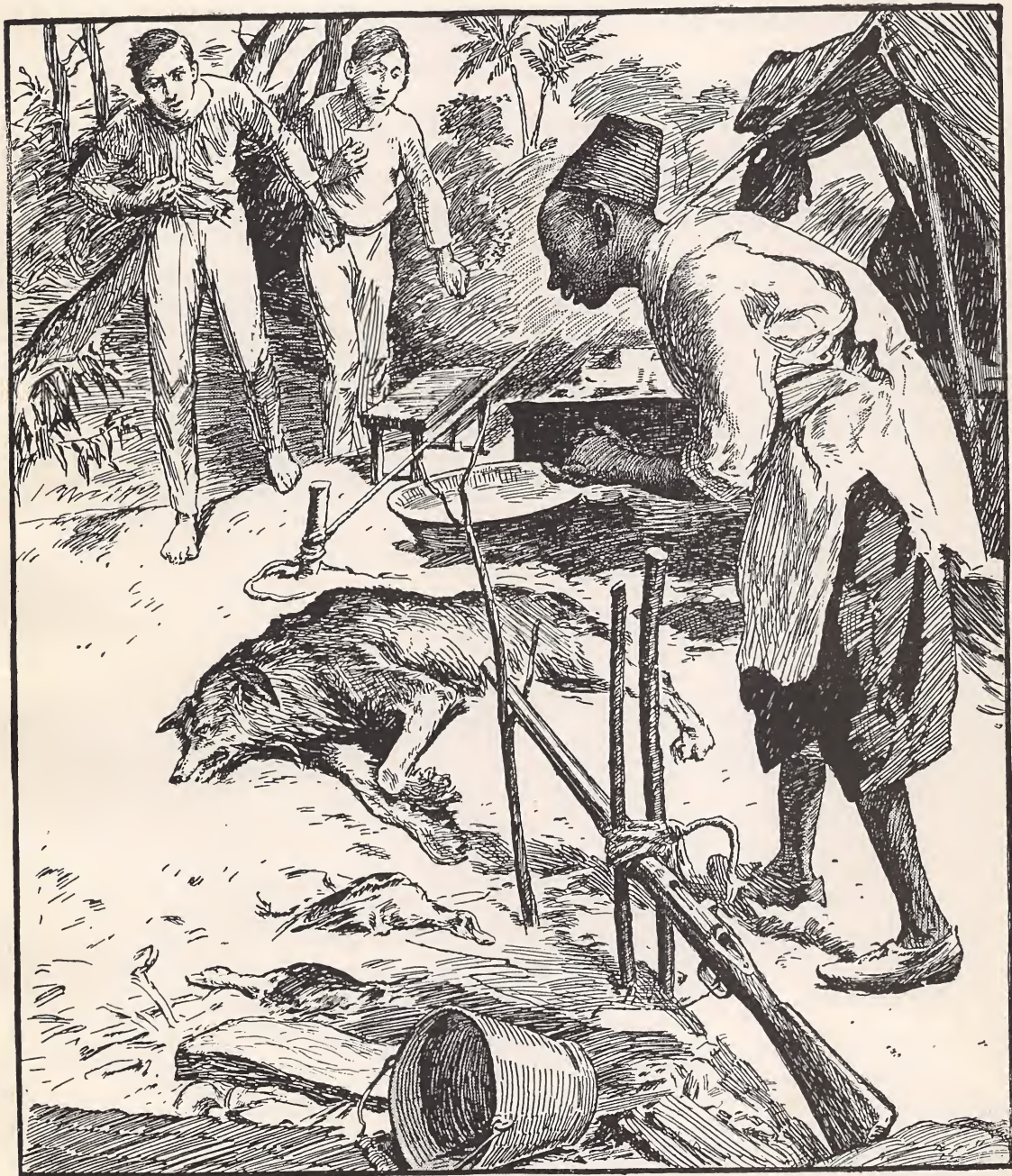
'I know all 'bout that. I make it nice and strong,' and Selim seized a spade and marched off some fifty paces into the desert, where he was seen digging and scooping with his hands. The boys knew full well what he was about, but had no disposition to follow. In a few minutes he returned with the water-fowl that Dick had shot at the Dismal Swamp, and which had been condemned as being far too high. If it was too high then, what was its altitude now? Dick and Harry held their noses and turned their heads away.

'Dis nice and strong,' chuckled Selim; 'dis fetch him.' He dragged the savoury morsels along the ground and into the thicket and back again, then fastened them to the muzzle of the gun, and connected them with a string to the trigger. When all was ready, Dick, still holding his nose with one hand, slipped a cartridge into the breech with the other.

(Continued on page 226.)



"Uncle Charlie in full travelling rig was a sight to behold."



“Selim was already there, gloating over the extended victim.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINCY.

(Continued from page 223.)

I was now quite late, the moon high in the sky, and no sign of Uncle Charlie. It seemed probable that he would not return that night. Supper was the chief meal of the day at the camp, but to-night they would have to go to bed supperless, or with nothing better than a dry biscuit; still, they fell asleep at once and slept soundly. It is true Harry had a horrible dream, but then he always was 'a oner at dreams,' as Dick told him. He was seated in the tomb-like cavity beneath the gigantic statue in the rock temple, besieged by a pack of hyænas, and the funny part of it was that though he was shut in on all sides by the stone walls of the dungeon, he could distinctly see the semicircle of tearing, dancing hyænas outside—their mouths gaping wide, displaying their horrible fangs as they tore up the ground with their paws. In the silence of the night an alarming report rang through the camp. Harry almost literally sprang to his feet, bursting the rocky tomb and scattering the hyænas; but Dick, the imperturbable, sat up, muttering drowsily, 'Keep your hair on, Harry, it's only the trap,' and turning over on the other side was asleep again.

In the early morning, before dressing, the boys were out to see the effect of the shot. Selim was already there, gloating over the extended victim—not a hyæna, however, but a jackal. The charge of small shot had gone clean through his head, and Harry decided to have another skin as payment for his lost supper.

Toward mid-day Uncle Charlie returned; he had had no better breakfast than a few dry biscuits, and after his walk in the sun across the desert was tired and thirsty. Whilst Selim bustled about, getting him some tea, he took off his belt and revolver holster with a sigh of relief, saying, 'These weapons may be necessary, but in walking they chafe one's thigh abominably. I think I must have a sore place as large as my hand.'

'Why don't you tighten the belt and wear the revolver higher up?' said Dick, sympathetically.

The Professor looked up sharply at Dick, with an expression of interest, exclaiming, 'That's a good idea of yours, Dick—I never thought of that.' After a few moments spent in stirring his tea with the spoon, he added, 'I think you've got a decidedly practical bent, Dick. I have great hopes that you will do something in the future. It is true you made an awful mess of that Exam.: but it isn't every one that does well at Exams. I never found the slightest difficulty in them myself; we are differently constituted, I suppose. I am beginning to fancy that I am not, strictly speaking, what you would call a practical man. As we get older we pass through many searchings of heart, and we begin to see that we are not what might be termed perfect spheres, containing in proper balance the attributes of man. Well! well! now look here, Dick, I think you have a very decided talent for practical matters—for construction, too. I think you ought to do something cred table in the world. I remember there was a young man at college, in my time, who could do almost anything with his hands, from sharpening a pencil to

making a bookcase: he at one glance saw how a piece of work should be done, then did it with the greatest ease. I never heard if he cut a great figure in life, but he certainly had a remarkable talent. Now if, as I suspect, you have the same gift, you can be of great service in this undertaking of ours. I should like you to come with me now and have a very serious look at the north front of the temple, and give me your own unbiassed opinion on two or three difficult points.

'You tell me that you could discover nothing when you examined the passages again yesterday; I also had my journey for nothing: that is to say, though there were many points of interest that opened out fresh fields of thought, and I have made many notes and memoranda, the journey was valueless as regards our quest. That temple does not accord in any way with the description of the Scribe, and the deductions we have made therefrom. However, I am glad I went, for now I feel more certain than ever that our temple is the temple. So if you are ready, we'll pop a few biscuits in our pockets and start.'

Dick was not aware that he had any particular gift for practical matters, nor in fact that he had any gift at all, but he felt flattered, and meant to live up to his new-found reputation, beside which he fancied he detected a dispirited note in these utterances, and that Uncle Charlie was losing confidence in himself, and this would never do. So he accompanied the Professor, determined to do his best.

They now stood before the extensive north front of the temple, with its two lofty pyramidal towers and the great blank wall of the hall that connected them to one-half their height. The towers rose with a slight inclination to a height of eighty feet or thereabouts, and the base of each measured nearly as much—two enormous masses of blank masonry without the slightest sign of any opening to the Scribe's chamber or indication that there had been such an opening which had been built up as in the case of the gateway.

'There!' said the Professor. 'We think, and not without good reason, that the opening to the chamber of Take the Scribe, now bricked up, is in the wall of one of those towers. Which tower? That is the first thing to discover. The second difficulty is in all that great surface of stone to find the exact spot of the opening, probably not more than six or eight feet square. Thirdly, if we succeed in finding the spot, how, in that precipitous wall at that height, can we work it? How can one man and three boys without scaffolding and without any machinery cut a way through? Don't speak,' continued the Professor, lifting his hand, as Dick was about to make a suggestion. 'Don't say a word about it till you have thought it well over. Now, if you had to do it, and it all depended on your judgment, how would you set about it? I confess I am nearly at my wits' end. What would you do? I will leave you for an hour—think it out.'

(Continued on page 229.)

'REMOVE THAT DOG.'

SIR HENRY HAWKINS, the well-known judge, had a dog of whom he was very fond, and it was his custom when he went daily to the Courts of Justice to take this dog with him. It was usually very quiet, and sat patiently in a certain spot in the Court, until

the proceedings of the day were over, and it was time to go home with his master.

On one occasion, however, his presence was somewhat embarrassing to the learned judge, for something in court disturbed the dog, and he began to bark furiously.

Sir Henry Hawkins arose in his seat and said sternly, 'Whose dog is that?'

There was, of course, no response. The dog was his own, and he knew it.

He then went on to speak of the impropriety of any one daring to bring a dog into a Court of Justice, and gave directions to the usher that the offending animal should be at once removed.

FRANK ELLIS.

A GENEROUS FOE.

THE Crescent had triumphed, and, after the fight, Great Saladin, Lord of the realms of the East, bade bring to his presence in fetters each knight He had captured, while he with his Emirs did feast.

One knight he had noted, whose courage was great—
Brave Hugo of Tabarie, prince of that land,
Who had fought till, o'erwhelmed by the malice of fate,
His sword had slipped out of his war-weary hand.

Quoth Saladin, 'Christian, they tell me that thou
Art counted a prince in thine own native strand;
Why, then, dost thou leave thine own kingdom, and now
Dost seek, and seek vainly, to conquer my land?'

'To ransom a soldier so great and so brave,
One hundred of thousands of crowns do I ask!
The Christians, methinks, will give gladly to save
Thy life.' Answered Hugo, 'Too great is the task!'

'Twere better to slay me.' Quoth Saladin, 'Nay,
This much I will grant thee: Go back to thy land
And gather this ransom. Six months from to-day
(Thou shalt swear it) again place thy life in my hand!'

The promise is given: alas! 'tis in vain,
For the brave knight to seek for a treasure so vast—
Not one-half of the gold is he able to gain,
Ere the time is at hand when his freedom is past.

Once more in the Saracen's camp he doth lie.
'Sir Hugo,' cries Saladin, 'so thou hast failed!
By the beard of the Prophet, I swore thou shouldst die
If the gold lacked one shekel.' The knight never
paled.

'Yet it grieves me to slay thee, who, true to thy word,
Hast returned to face death, when escape was so near.
But little of knighthood as yet have I heard;
Now speak of this Order which knows not of fear.'

Then Hugo did tell how knights live for the sake
Of Purity, Honour, and Courage. Then heard
The Sultan how by these 'tis easy to make
Far stronger than fetters a knight's given word.

He finished, and Saladin gazed for awhile
On the face of his captive; then turned to his court,
And turning, he spake to his chiefs with a smile:
'By mine oath he must die, if the ransom fall short.

'Is there none here among you will give of his gold
To save from destruction so gallant a foe?'
Not an Emir or chieftain, so I have been told,
But straightway before him his treasures did throw.

'Thou art free,' quoth the Sultan, 'and to thee I
give
The gold which lies here in a heap on the ground,
That the Christians may learn, when they see thou dost
live,
That in Saracens also some virtues are found.'

'Great Sultan,' cried Hugo, 'thy bounty I take
And offer again—as a ransom for those,
My comrades, whom captive I will not forsake,
Myself being free, in the hands of my foes!'

'Thy comrades I free, not for sake of the gold,
But to honour a foeman so worthy of fame.
Return to thy country. Where'er this is told,
Renown and great glory shall follow thy name!'

To the camp of the Christians the captives return
And tell of their fortune wherever they go:
Of the Saracens' bounty, that all men may learn
That though fierce be the struggle, yet gallant the foe.

J. OHN.

HOW A THIEF WAS CAUGHT.

TALKING aloud to one's self is not a good habit, but upon one occasion it was of use to a wrongly suspected person.

A servant-girl at Delft, in Holland, was accused of being concerned in the robbery of her master's house one Sunday while the family were at church. Appearances were against the girl, who was found guilty and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. But her conduct in prison was so excellent—and, indeed, it had always been good—that her master not only successfully petitioned for the shortening of her punishment, but even took her again into his service.

Some time after her release, an incident occurred which completely established her innocence, and led to the detection of the real criminal. As, one day, she was passing through the butcher's market at Delft, a man, tapping her on the shoulder, whispered some words into her ear. The girl instantly recollected that she had spoken these very words aloud on the day of the robbery, while she was looking at herself in a glass, never dreaming that any other person was near. Much excited, she hastened to her master and told him what had occurred. He, who was a magistrate, caused inquiries to be made as to the character and circumstances of the man who had quoted the words, and learned that about the time of the robbery this person had suddenly become rich, and that nobody knew where his money had come from. Search was made in the man's own house and in that of his nearest relatives, with the result that various articles were found which had disappeared from the magistrate's house on the day of the theft.

Then the truth came out. The thief had hidden himself in the garret where the turf was stowed away. This adjoined the maid's room, and while the poor girl was dressing the man overheard her words. Having



“One day she was passing through the market.”

taken what he came for, he got off unperceived; but afterwards, as we have seen, his own foolishness in repeating the maid's remark drew suspicion upon him.

He was duly punished for his crime, and the city authorities made handsome compensation to the servant girl for the wrong she had suffered.

VOICES FROM THE ETHER.

(Concluded from page 204.)



FOR messages sent by the system which we have been considering so far, the electric discharges are violent. The early waves of a train are strong and vigorous, but the tailing-off of the later waves is rapid. One may assume, therefore, that the farther off the receiver is from the transmitter, the smaller will be the number of waves of a train that will affect it. Consequently, the gaps between trains are of uncertain length, varying in accordance with the distance travelled. To make sure of the waves carrying a long way, enormously powerful discharges must be used. This leads to a difficulty in tuning. If two pianos are placed closed together and a note is struck on one, it will be echoed by the other, owing to the 'sympathy' between the two sets of similarly tuned strings. But if a drum were banged closed to a piano there would be heard a confused jangle of sound, because the powerful air vibrations from the drum affect *all* the strings more or less. If, then, the waves emitted by a powerful station are caught by an unsympathetic receiver close at hand, any 'tuning' is liable to be broken down by the sheer violence of the waves. Hence it is difficult by this system to maintain secrecy.

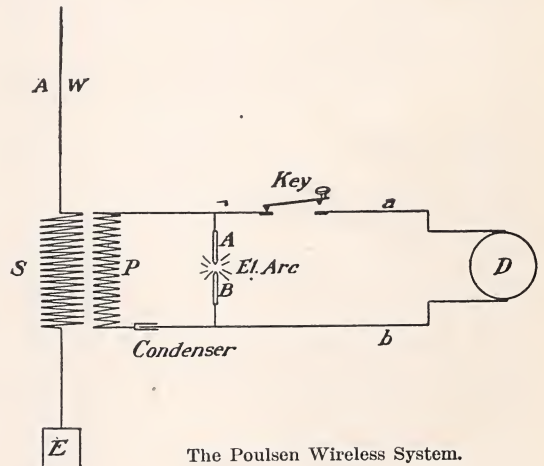
What is needed for 'selective' wireless telegraphy is a continuous succession of electric waves of exactly the same length and vigour and of very rapid formation, broken into trains of a low-enough frequency per second to give an audible note. In the illustration is seen a system invented by Valdemar Poulsen of Copenhagen. A dynamo D, when the transmitting key is depressed, so as to complete the electric circuit, sends current through wires *a* and *b* to A and B, the electrodes, or terminals, of an electric arc lamp. The *a* wire is continued to form the primary winding P of an induction coil; the *b* wire to a condenser. The burning of the electric arc causes currents to surge to and fro through P thousands of times a second at a uniform rate, and these surgings, magnified by the secondary coil S, are thrown out by the aerial wire A W. It was discovered that if the arc lamp were made to burn in air mixed with a large proportion of hydrogen, the number of surgings could be raised to one hundred thousand or more per second—a sufficiently high rate to make tuning easy.

A 'ticker,' worked mechanically or electrically, is included in the transmitting circuit to interrupt it any desired number of times per second, and break up the waves into trains of equal duration. The aerial wire and circuit of the receiver can be tuned so exactly to the electrical waves created by the transmitter as to keep out waves of any other length; owing to the exceedingly high pitch of the tuning, the system is not affected by powerful waves of varying intensity. So sharp and accurate is the tuning that a dozen stations within speaking distance of one another may be working in pairs without mutual interference or the tapping of messages not intended for any but one particular receiver.

A wireless operator makes on the average about two hundred and fifty actual signals per minute. A telephone must transmit some hundreds of thousands of signals, each corresponding to an air vibration, in the same time.

The reasons why wireless telephony has not developed as rapidly as wireless telegraphy are (1) the difficulty of sending out electrical waves of equal strength at a sufficiently high rate; (2) the difficulty of influencing these waves by a telephone transmitter. The current used is necessarily many times more powerful than that for which the ordinary wire-circuit transmitter is designed, and the passing of heavy currents through a transmitter is liable to heat it and make it work badly.

The first difficulty has been surmounted with considerably success by the Poulsen electric arc (just described), which can be made to cause several hundred thousand discharges per second, and also by dynamos generating current which changes its direction very rapidly. A telephone receiver responding to every one of the waves which strikes it gives out a note much too high to be heard by the human ear. But the waves, if influenced periodically by the much less frequent air vibrations set up by the voice, may be made to impress these secondary vibrations on the receiver.



The Poulsen Wireless System.

Let us suppose that the waves are being thrown off at a rate of one hundred thousand per second; that a note is being sung into the transmitter which causes its disc to vibrate two thousand times a second; and that the transmitter is included in the circuit which sends out the waves. Every time an air wave presses on the disc the amount of current is increased, so that the waves, instead of being all of the same strength, gradually increase and diminish their force two thousand times a second, each secondary, or big, wave covering a group of fifty primary waves. The receiver is affected by the waves in a corresponding manner, its vibrations being individually inaudible, though the ear is able to distinguish the throbbings caused by the passage of groups, which reproduce the original note sung into the receiver.

The transmitter is connected either with the generator, which provides the power, so that it causes variation in the current before it is converted; or with the aerial wire so as to influence the oscillations in it before they are communicated to the ether. Very large transmitters are used, and in some cases they have water circulated through them to carry off the heat created by the resistance of the carbon grains to the current.

ARCHIBALD WILLIAMS.

NOTABLE NICKNAMES.

MANY eminent persons of former times are familiar to us solely by their nicknames. There was a painter named Giovanni Francisco Barbieri, who is generally spoken of as Guercino. But Guercino, which means 'squint-eyed,' was only a nickname given because of a defect in the artist's sight. Another painter, whose real name was Robusti, was dubbed Tintoretto, 'little dyer,' because his father was a *tintore*—that is, in Italian, 'a dyer.'

Thus we see that nicknames have a knack of *sticking*. One of the worst of Roman Emperors is still known as Caligula, 'little boots,' a playful nickname given to him by the soldiers in allusion to the boots he wore.

Because the eccentric Doctor Abernethy was continually exhorting his patients to read his book, 'Surgical Observations,' people gave him the nickname of 'Doctor My-Book.' Commodore Byron, when at sea, nearly always experienced bad weather; hence his sailors spoke of him as 'Foul-weather Jack.' Admiral Vernon was called 'Old Grog,' because in bad weather he wore a 'Grogam' cloak. It was this admiral, by the way, who instituted the custom of serving out to the seamen of the Royal Navy a mixture of spirits and water. This beverage was termed 'grog,' after its introducer.

Quite a number of men have been styled 'the Hammer.' A famous Jewish patriot is called by us Judas Maccabæus, which means 'Judas the Hammer.' Another hard hitter was the Frankish King Charles, the grandfather of Charlemagne, who got his nickname of Charles Martel ('the Hammer') from the mighty blows of his mace upon Saracen skulls at the battle of Tours. On his tomb in Westminster Abbey, Edward I. is described as 'the Hammer of the Scotch.' (This king in his lifetime had another nickname—'Longshanks.') Thomas Cromwell, in Henry the Eighth's time, was called 'the Hammer of the monasteries,' and, in the next century, his illustrious namesake, Oliver Cromwell, was 'the Hammer of Kings.'

Napoleon I. had a host of nicknames, one of which was 'The Little Corporal.' His antagonist, the Duke of Wellington, was called 'the Iron Duke,' and also (from the size of his nose) 'Nosey.' The great mediæval scholar, Thomas Aquinas, when a student, was nicknamed by his companions, 'The Dumb Ox,' though it is said that his master remarked, 'If that ox should begin to bellow the earth would resound with the noise.' And by-and-by the same Thomas, renowned throughout Europe, was honoured as 'the Eagle of Divines' and 'the Angelic Doctor.'

Perhaps the most glorious nickname ever bestowed (though probably given wholly in ridicule) was that invented by the people of Antioch in Syria about two thousand years ago. We use that name still. Do you know what it is?

E. D.

CUTHBERT.

CUTHBERT is a jolly decent chap, and all that, when you've got him to yourself, but he gets a bit sickening in the abstract, grumbled Harry, and I nodded a gloomy assent.

Truth to tell, I was not quite sure about the exact meaning of 'abstract' (except that it is generally something to do with nouns), and I don't believe Harry was

either, but it sounded big, and I pretended I knew, because I did understand his meaning, anyhow.

It was like this. Cuthbert is our cousin, and he is a year younger than Harry and a year older than I am, and we are really very fond of him, for he is as keen on cricket and footer as we are, and a really splendid chap; and there is nothing we like better than to have him with us on a visit, or to go to stay with him. What we *don't* like about him is the way he makes people find fault with us. Of course *he* can't help it, and he would be dreadfully vexed if he knew, because he is such a good soul that he would hate to get us into trouble. The secret of all the worry is that Cuth has got the bump of usefulness, and we haven't.

Elsie, our sister, says it is all nonsense about bumps, and that it is a matter of habit and good-nature, and she is always holding Cuthbert up to us as an example, and advising us to copy him. Elsie has just been staying with Aunt Winifred—Cuth's mother—and since she came back she has talked continually of 'that dear, useful boy.'

Now, Harry and I are very fond of our big sister, Elsie, and very proud of her, and we want her to be proud of us, too; so it makes us feel rather gloomy, and, perhaps, a wee bit jealous, when she seems to think such a lot more of Cuthbert than she does of us.

'If Cuthbert were here he would make this toast for me,' she will say, with a gentle sigh, sometimes, as she kneels before the dining-room fire making the toast for tea. Then Hal and I make a dash for the toasting-fork together, and generally manage to send the bread flying into the fender or the fire. At another time Elsie will raise her eyebrows as she glances at a little pile of letters on the hall-table, and say, 'Well, I *did* think some one would have posted my letters for me. If Cuthbert had been here—'

Before she has finished her sentence we are both flying on our way to the post without stopping to change our slippers. You see, it is not because we don't *want* to do the useful things that we don't think about doing them—only we don't remember till we are reminded, and Elsie seems to think that takes the gilt off our 'little acts of service,' and help to make the difference between Cuthbert and us.

'Father and Mother are going to stay with Aunt Winifred next week,' said Harry. 'I wonder if they will always be noticing how different we are from Cuth when they come back? I repeat, Cuthbert's good points *do* get a bit sickening!'

And again I nodded silently.

That afternoon, while we were having tea, Clara, our servant, came into the dining-room, crying, and told Mother she had had a letter saying her sister was ill, and she must go home to nurse her. Mother comforted her a bit, and said she could go, and when peace was restored, as they say in stories, Elsie said, 'This means that Clara will be away for at least a week.'

'Yes,' sighed Mother, 'it is very unfortunate that I should be going away next week. Unless we can get help, I think I will write to your aunt, postponing our visit.'

'Oh, no, don't do that,' said Elsie. 'I shall manage all right. There will only be the two boys and myself to cater for.' And then, of course, Cuth's virtues were dragged in—though we knew Elsie did not really mean to hurt our feelings. 'Aunt Winnie was telling me that they were left without a maid a few weeks ago,'

she said, 'and Cuthbert was a wonderful help as good as any girl! He even went downstairs early in the morning, put the kettle on the gas-stove, and brought Auntie up a cup of tea before it was time for her to get up to light the fires. He really is a boy in a thousand.'

Hal and I each stole a glance at Mother, to see if she was comparing our useful cousin with her own two useless sons, but she only said, 'Well, if you really think you can manage alone, Elsie, dear, I won't write. I should not care to leave a strange girl in the house, when I come to think about it; she might require so much teaching.' I am sure Harry and Clement will try to give as little trouble as possible.'

We eagerly agreed, and then, because trying to help is the next step to trying not to give trouble, the same idea struck both of us, and we shot a lightning glance of triumph at each other across the table. That glance clearly said that *we would outshine Cuthbert in his domestic crisis*, and earn Elsie's outspoken appreciation and regard.

'We could scarcely wait for tea to be over to discuss our plans, and afterwards we were impatient for next week to come so that we could put those plans into execution—to speak again like a story-book.'

'We haven't a gas-stove,' said Harry, 'but we will go one better than old Cuth! We will light the kitchen fire, and the dining-room fire as well, and Elsie shall have her cup of tea in bed, and her breakfast, too! I do hope she tells Cuth about it afterwards!'

'Anyway, it will be grand hearing her tell Mother all about it!' I said. 'Perhaps she will call us "boys in ten thousand!"'

'She ought to for two fires and a breakfast,' agreed Hal. 'Here's a proportion sum for you, Clem: If one cup of tea and a gas-stove make a boy in one thousand, what ought a whole breakfast and two coal fires to make? I say, old boy, isn't it ripping luck for us that Clara's sister should fall ill just now?'

And in our excitement it did not strike either of us at the time that this was very unkind to our poor maid and her sister. (To make up for our thoughtlessness, I will stop to add here that the sister got better pretty soon, and Clara came back quite happy.)

We were so taken up with what we meant to do when Elsie was left in charge, that we forgot to begin at once by helping Mother as well, so our plans came all the more as a surprise to Elsie.

We went to bed in good time the first night, and took it in turns to listen over the stairs to see when Elsie retired, and, later, to creep down and listen outside her door to make sure that she was asleep. Fortunately for our plans Elsie was a heavy sleeper, and she did not hear me creep in softly and secure her alarm-clock, neither did she awaken when I softly drew the key from her bedroom door, and locked her in from the outside.

If Elsie *should* chance to awaken too soon in the morning, without the aid of the alarm, we did not intend her to come down and frustrate our carefully-laid plans of usefulness! It was a good thing we thought of the clock, for our own sakes as well as Elsie's, for after our late hours of waiting and watching, I am sure we should have overslept ourselves without its aid. As it was, we awoke with a great start when the screeching thing went off in our ears—we had put it on the pillows to make sure of hearing its warning.

'It can't be time to get up yet!' groaned Hal, after we had decided the noise was not a pre-alarm.

'It is!' I sighed, striking a match to see the time, and dropping the red-hot end on to the pillow-slip, where we afterwards found a hole. 'It's six o'clock.'

'Half-past will do,' murmured Hal, sleepily. 'Lie down, Clem, we will have another forty winks.'

'Cuthbert!' I breathed grimly, and Harry shot out of bed like a cannon-ball.

Then we dressed, and our troubles began. We had looked in the *Encyclopædia* (I have had to look in the dictionary to find out how to spell that word) the day before to see if we could find directions how to lay and light a fire, but we couldn't; still, we didn't fancy it would be difficult work. As a rule, fires are harder to put out than to light—big ones, that is!

Elsie had put the wood to dry overnight on top of the kitchen range, so we thought that was the right quantity, never supposing that she hadn't put another lot in the dining-room! So we used it all up, and heaps of paper, and then the coal, and at last got a good fire, and put the kettle on to boil—we filled it out of the hot-water tap, as Hal said it would not take so long to boil. Then we went into the dining-room, and I cleaned the grate while Harry went into the cellar for more wood, which, of course, was damp!

We had used up all the newspapers we could find on the kitchen fire, so took some old magazines which, it turned out afterwards, Elsie had particularly wanted: and after a while we got the thing to go, but the smoke was awful. Harry said we had better shut the door, in case the smell of smoke went upstairs and roused Elsie. We were so black by this time that we went upstairs to have another wash. We must have been a long time over the dining-room fire, for when we came downstairs again there was a most horrid smell in the kitchen—the kettle had boiled dry, and was getting burnt at the bottom.

There were also queer-looking clouds coming through the chinks of the dining-room door, and, hurrying in, we found the room filled with dense smoke. Nearly choking, I made my way across to the fireplace, and found that when cleaning the grate I had closed the little door they call a register, and the smoke had come into the room instead of going up the chimney.

We *did* feel unhappy, and, to make things worse, Elsie was making a frightful noise on her bedroom door, and clamouring to be let out. At first we took no notice, and hurriedly began to get a breakfast-tray ready, though we hadn't much hope that Elsie would eat bread-and-butter, and think her breakfast complete without tea—the bacon we had put to toast in the Dutch-oven was burnt to a cinder, and the water had boiled over it as well.

But Elsie's cries grew so loud that we had to go up and unlock her door. We must have looked very miserable, for her angry look soon disappeared as she asked us what was the matter, and what all the dreadful smells were, and if the house was on fire—she soon saw that we had not been playing a practical joke on her.

'It's—it's—Cuthbert!' burst out Harry, and then Elsie drew the whole story from us, and I do believe there were tears in the dear old girl's eyes, as she kissed us both, and said we really should help her, for she could see we wanted to.

It took some time to put things right downstairs; but Elsie did not seem to mind a bit, and she said the mistakes were really through *her* fault—not ours or Cuthbert's.

A. C. VERNON.



"He brought Auntie up a cup of tea."



“Bob knelt beside him, almost crying.”

DICK'S DISOBEDIENCE.

'GOOD-BYE, Dickie dear,' said Mrs. Danvers, leaning out of the train to kiss her ten-year-old son. 'I will be sure to give Cousin Jack your message, and I won't forget the white rabbit. Be good, darling.' She squeezed his hand, and the train started.

'Come back on Friday, Mother, and I will meet you,' called Dick, running along to the end of the platform, and waving his handkerchief till the train was out of sight.

Then he put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a bright new shilling, and looked at it. What a surprise he would give his mother on her birthday! It would be much better than buying that new humming-top for himself.

'You must not ride that bicycle of yours for a few days, Dick,' said his father, that evening. 'The brake has gone wrong, but I will mend it for you at the weekend. Don't touch it until then, or you may have an accident. Do you hear?'

Dick looked up from the rabbit-hutch he was making, and answered, 'All right, Father,' without any hesitation. Dick was not much interested in bicycles just then.

Next morning he was rather late for school, but as he slipped into his place he noticed that every one seemed excited.

'Are you coming to Sandford this afternoon, old chap?' whispered Tom Bradley, as they hunted for their books after prayers. 'There's going to be a big circus on the green, and the Head's given us a half-holiday!'

'Hurrah!' cried Dick, in a loud whisper. 'Of course I will be there'—and then he stopped. 'But it's five miles each way, and Father says my bike isn't safe.'

'Don't be a silly—you were on it last week!'

'Will you boys stop whispering!' called the headmaster, rapping on his desk, and the boys bent over their sums with startled faces. It would never do to be kept in.

'Half-past one at the corner, then,' said Bob, when school was over. 'That will give us time enough.'

'I wish I could ask Father, but he won't be home till the evening. Perhaps——' began Dick, hesitatingly.

'Of course he would let you go; but if you're a baby I don't want you,' cried Bob, who was twelve.

'No, no! I will come with you. I don't care!' and Dick's face was very red.

The big tent was crowded that afternoon, but the two boys had a seat in the front, and enjoyed everything.

'I'm going to be a clown as soon as I leave school,' announced Bob. 'Oh! just look at his nose!'

'See that man on the black horse?' cried Dick. 'That's the sort of chap for me.'

At last it was over. The two boys lingered after their schoolfellows had eaten ices and cracked nuts, and gone home.

'Tea-time!' said Bob, suddenly. 'Come on! I'm hungry, and it's all downhill this way.'

Yes, it *was* downhill, and Dick soon remembered his father's warning—too late. 'I can't stop myself!' he screamed. 'Bob! I can't stop!' and the next moment he was rushing along towards a brick wall. Crash! and Dick was lying on the ground, underneath his bicycle, with his eyes closed.

Bob knelt beside him, almost crying. 'Oh, what shall I do?' he wailed.

'I will see to him, my lad,' called a man's voice; and the next moment the village doctor sprang out of his trap and ran forward. 'A very nasty knock and a broken arm,' he said, after a moment's examination. 'No, he is not killed!' seeing Bob's white face. 'We must just get him home as soon as possible.'

When Dick opened his eyes he was lying in his own bed with his mother bending over him. His head ached horribly, and he seemed to be covered with bandages; but when he looked into his mother's face, that hurt him worst of all. For he remembered his disobedience. 'I didn't mean to be bad,' he whispered, beginning to sob. 'Are you dreadfully angry with me?'

His mother looked at him for a moment, and then she smiled. 'No, dear,' she said, 'I am not angry. Go to sleep again, now, for to-morrow is my birthday, and I want to show you the new white rabbit.'

'Oh!' cried the boy, 'you are the best mother in the whole wide world, and I will never disobey again.'

Then his mother bent to kiss him, for she knew that he had learnt his lesson.

F. D. HARRIS, M.A.

BRITISH ISLES OVERSEAS.

ONE of the most beautiful and interesting of all the English possessions is Ceylon, a tropical island at the extreme south of India. In old days there was a legend that Adam and Eve lived there after being expelled from Paradise, and the chain of small islets which almost connects it with the mainland has been given the name of Adam's Bridge.

We all know the verse in the old hymn, beginning, 'What though the spicy breezes blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle.' Though the hymn was originally written about the Isle of Java, the words are quite true of Ceylon, for when the wind is off the shore the fragrance of the cinnamon gardens, for which the island is famous, is carried far out to sea.

Ceylon was well known in very early times, and was highly civilised. It had a long line of native kings, the capital town being Anaradurapura. Now that city is deserted and ruinous, and only the fragments of its temples and statues hidden away in the jungle remain to bear witness to the former grandeur and power of the island.

As was the case in so many Eastern lands, the first Europeans to settle in Ceylon were the Portuguese. These people were ousted by the Dutch, who, in their turn, were driven out by the English. In each case the Cingalese at first welcomed the new-comers and helped them, but in each case, too, they rebelled after a time, and tried to regain undisputed possession of the island. England had more than twenty years of warfare in Ceylon, and many terrible cruelties were committed by the native kings who opposed her.

The capital of the island at that time was Kandy, up in the hills of the interior, and here a terrible disaster took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when an English garrison stationed in the city was surprised and massacred, by the orders of the Kandian king. A soldier who managed to escape describes how the town was surrounded by thousands of natives, and how, after many had been killed, the remnant were forced to surrender. They were then promised safety, and allowed to march through the jungle to the river on their way to the port of Trincomallee. At the river,

however, they were stopped, their arms taken from them, and all were murdered except the one fugitive and the commanding officer, Major Davie, who was taken back to Kandy, and kept in close captivity there for many years.

Soon after this event, a strong expedition was sent up to Kandy, and the treacherous king was deposed. Since then England has remained in undisputed possession of the island.

The largest town in Ceylon is now Colombo, which is a great port and coaling station, but by far the most interesting place is Kandy, for there may be seen the old palace of the native kings, and the famous temple where the supposed tooth of Buddha is preserved.

Buddhism is the religion of Ceylon, and the natives venerate this relic and make pilgrimages to Kandy in order to visit the temple. It is generally believed, however, that the present tooth is only a comparatively modern substitute, and that the original was destroyed by the Portuguese more than three hundred years ago.

Ceylon is inhabited by several different races, the Tamils and Cingalese, who both originally came from India, many Mohammedans, or Moormen, from Goa, and a strange wild race called Veddahs, supposed to be the old natives of the island, who live in the jungles of the interior and are rapidly dying out.

Ceylon is very fertile, and the climate, while hot, is fairly healthy. Tea, coffee, and cocoa are all cultivated, and these, besides spices, are exported to England and other countries. The island is a Crown Colony, and although so near India is quite separate from it, with a government and laws of its own. The natives are now peaceful and prosperous, and show few signs of the treachery and savage cruelty of their fierce ancestors.

In Ceylon there are many wild animals, chief among them being elephants, which may still be found in the thick forest which covers a great part of the island. There are also leopards, monkeys, and many different kinds of snakes, one of the most deadly being the cobra. The natives catch these snakes and train them to dance to the sound of music. A snake-charmer may often be seen in a Colombo bazaar, with his reed flute and basket of poisonous serpents. The Cingalese are also clever conjurors and can do many wonderful tricks.

East of Ceylon, in the Bay of Bengal, are two groups of islands, the Andamans and the Nicobars, which are also British possessions. The chief town in the Andamans is Port Blair, and here there is a penal settlement for Indian prisoners. The greater number of these islands are still covered with thick tropical forest, and, although they were discovered long ago, the natives are still almost as wild and uncivilised as they were in the days when the explorer, Marco Polo, described them as being like wild beasts, with heads, eyes, and teeth like mastiff dogs.

One very curious thing about these natives is that they have no means of lighting fires. It is supposed that originally they obtained fire from a volcano on one of the islands, and have kept it carefully ever since. They always kindle one fire from another, and when they go on a journey, they hide a smouldering log of wood so that it may be ready to be fanned into a blaze on their return.

The Andamanese, like many other savages, are very fond of children, and treat them with great kindness. Babies are given names when they are born, but later these are changed, and a girl, when she reaches the age

of eighteen, is always called after some flower or blossoming tree.

The inhabitants of the Andamans live in huts built on the ground, but their neighbours in the Nicobar islands raise their homes on poles, and approach them by ladders which can be drawn up at night. A Nicobar village is a strange-looking place, with the quaint, beehive-like dwellings clustered closely together against the dense green background of the forest.

In the Indian Ocean is another group of islands, the Maldives, and far away to the south, below the Equator, are the Seychelles, Rodrigues, and Mauritius. This last place formerly belonged to France, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when France and England were at war, it was taken by General Abercrombie, and has remained a British possession ever since.

When Mauritius was first discovered, in the sixteenth century, there were no men or four-footed animals on the island, but there were many birds, and among them the great Dodo, now extinct. This creature must have been very extraordinary in appearance, and indeed the old Dutch explorers named it the *Valvogel*, or sickening bird. An English traveller in 1634 describes it in these words: 'Her body is round and extremely fat, her visage darts forth melancholie, she has two small wings which are unable to hoise her from the earth, and only serve to prove her a bird, which otherwise might be doubted'

A. A. METHLEY.

ACROSS THE WATER.

VII.—BRIDGES OF ROMANCE.

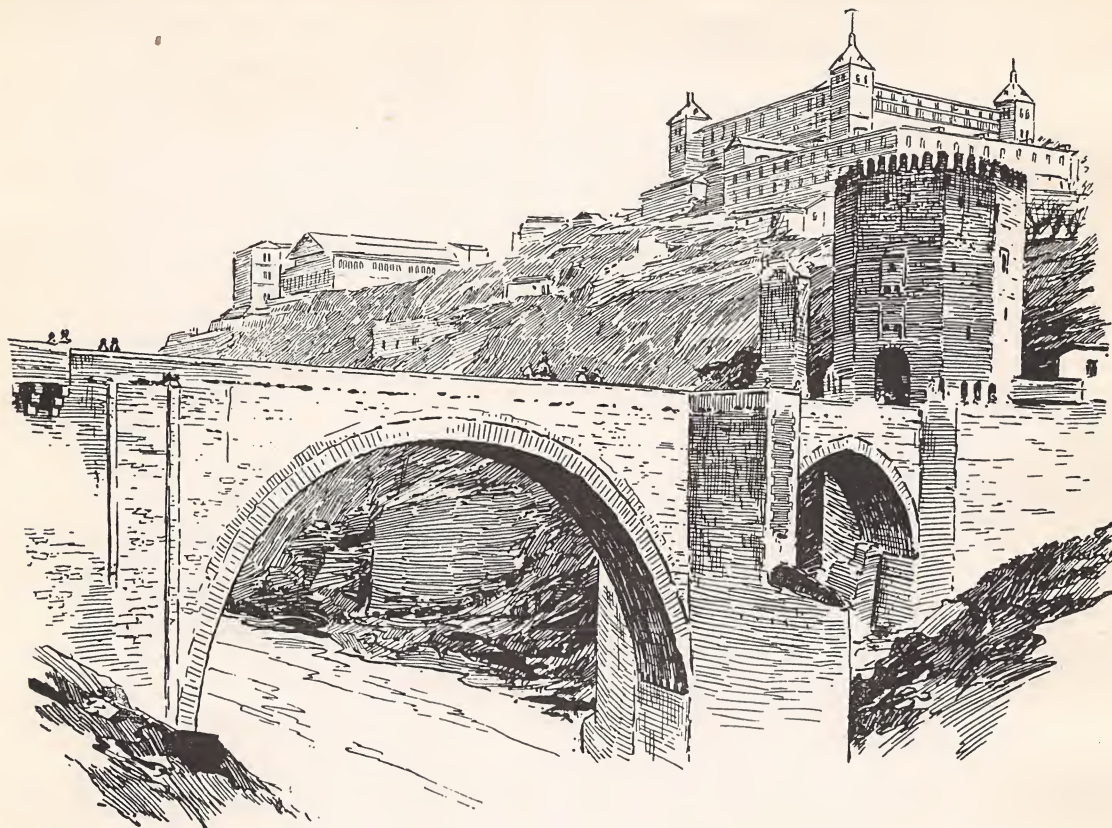
WHILE English children dance merrily to the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush' and 'Nuts in May,' other countries have other nursery ballads, and little French boys and girls all the world over bow and curtsy to the quaint old song, 'Sur la Pont d'Avignon.' Very few of them, however, unless they happen to live in the town of Avignon itself, know anything about the famous old bridge of which they sing, and its romantic history.

Avignon is a town in the south of France, which, although now-a-days rather old-fashioned and out-of-the-way, was in the Middle Ages a place of great importance; for there the Popes had their palace and there, too, was the wonderful bridge across the Rhone that, for many centuries, was the only bridge between Lyons and the sea.

In those days there was an order of monks in France, the Benedictines, part of whose duty it was to take charge of ferries and keep bridges in repair. The bridge of Avignon was under the care of these monks, and it was most likely this circumstance that gave rise to the strange legend of how the Bridge of St. Benezet, as it is called, came to be built.

The story tells of how, long ago, when there was no bridge at Avignon, a little boy named Benezet, or Benedict, was taking care of some sheep in the green fields that lie beyond the city on the opposite bank of the river. Suddenly he heard a voice from Heaven calling to him, and when he asked: 'Lord, who art thou?' the voice said: 'I will that thou should'st make me a bridge over the Rhone.'

The little boy was troubled, because he dare not leave his sheep alone, but all difficulties were smoothed



Puente Alcantara, Toledo, Spain.

away. An angel appeared in the guise of a pilgrim, who told Benezet exactly what to do and promised to guard the flock during his absence. Then the child made his way into the city, and, going before the bishop and chief men of Avignon who were assembled together, told them of his mission.

As was only natural, Benezet and his ambitious plan met with ridicule, and the provost of the city said to him: 'How can you build a bridge, when neither God, nor St. Peter, nor even the great Emperor Charles has been able to do it? But, since a bridge must be made of stone and lime, I will give you a stone that I have in my palace, and, if you can move it and carry it away, I will believe that you can build the bridge.'

Then the little shepherd boy was taken to the provost's palace and a great stone was shown to him, a stone so heavy that even thirty men could not lift it; but, to the amazement of every one, he took up the great boulder, and, carrying it to the river, placed it in position as the foundation-stone of his bridge.

When this miracle was seen the boy was hailed as a saint, and immediately great sums were subscribed and the wonderful Gothic bridge was built. All through mediæval times the Pont St. Benezet remained as one of the most important bridges in France, and many stirring events took place on it and round it.

Sir John Froissart, in his chronicles, tells us how in the year 1389 the King of France paid a visit to the

Pope at Avignon, and at nine o'clock in the morning rode over the bridge with a great train, among whom were his brother, his three uncles, and no less than twelve cardinals.

We can imagine the picture on that autumn morning when the royal procession, with armour gleaming and pennants waving, swept over the long bridge and up the hill into the city, where the Pope welcomed them and entertained the monarch with great state. But before long the scene changed, and Avignon was besieged by a French army, the bridge being closed, so that no provisions could be brought into the city.

We must leave Avignon now and go on across the Pyrenees into Spain, a country that has been invaded again and again, and where Romans, Visigoths, and Moors have all left traces of their skill as architects and engineers.

There are many wonderful bridges in Spain, and two of the most interesting are at Toledo, where the deep gorge of the Tagus is spanned by the Puente Alcantara and the Puente San Martino. The second of these two bridges consists of one great arch and two smaller ones, and there is a strange story of how a former bridge that stood on the same spot was built and destroyed.

This first Puente San Martino, we are told, was just completed, but the scaffold had not been removed, when the architect discovered, to his horror, that he had made a mistake in his calculations, and that there was a flaw

in the bridge which would cause its collapse directly the supports were taken away. The man confided the secret to his wife, and she, determined that no one should ever know the truth, went out alone and set fire to the wooden scaffold. The bridge was destroyed, but the reputation of the architect was saved.

There is another wonderful bridge, or rather, an aqueduct, at Segovia, which brings water from the hills into the town. History says that this great double-arched structure was built by the Roman conquerors of Spain, but the peasants of the country round have a legend which gives it a more romantic origin.

They tell a strange story of a beautiful maiden of the city who, having tired of carrying water to and from her father's house, offered to sell her soul to the Devil if he would build a bridge and bring water to the town. The offer was accepted and the work done in a single

night, but, as one stone was missing from the magic structure, the lady repudiated her rash bargain. The aqueduct, however, remains—a wonder to the countryside, and a great convenience to the people of Segovia, who still call it the Devil's Bridge.

There are several other Devil's Bridges to be seen in Spain, for any structure that seemed to be too wonderful to have been made by human hands was given a mysterious origin by the ignorant peasants.

We pass from devils to angels, and find in Rome the famous Ponte Sant' Angelo, which crosses the Tiber near the great circular tomb of the Emperor Hadrian, or, as it is called now, the Castello Sant' Angelo, on which stands the statue of an angel. There is a beautiful legend which tells us that, long ago, when a deadly pestilence was devastating Rome, the Archangel Michael appeared above Hadrian's tomb, with a drawn sword in



Ponte S. Angelo, Rome.

his hand, and stayed the plague. It is believed by many people that vast treasures, which in old times were cast into the Tiber, now lie buried in the mud beneath the Bridge of Sant' Angelo, and, from time to time, plans have been made for diverting the course of the river, and bringing to light, among other precious things, the seven-branched golden candlesticks which once stood in the Temple of Jerusalem.

THE FIRST SHIP TO PETROGRAD.

AT the beginning of the eighteenth century the site on which the capital of Russia is now built was a dreary morass, shaded by a primæval forest. The Czar Peter was a gigantic man with a giant's will, and a genius approaching insanity. He made up his mind that here, and nowhere else, should the capital of his empire be built. And so, after learning ship-building in Holland, as well as many other useful handicrafts at other places, he erected a small wooden hut among the marshes of the 'islands' of the Neva, and began to drive in piles, and build quays, and collect paving-stones to construct a 'New Amsterdam.'

Peter determined to have ships to beat those of the Swedes, and so gain the command of the northern seas. He wanted to open a grand 'gate' to his future empire, and have also a 'back door' into Europe. This famous king was possessed of a genial spirit, as the following story shows:

A ship was sailing in the northern seas, laden with a valuable cargo for the market of Reval, which was at that time a noted port. It was of the utmost importance that the goods should arrive promptly, but time was very short, and it was doubtful if the captain would be able to guide his good vessel into Reval at the appointed day.

'If the wind holds fair,' said Auke, the owner and captain, to Karl, the merchant-owner of its cargo, 'we shall make the port before noon to-day. Yonder is the Gulf just coming into sight.'

But the wind arose, and long before mid-day the sea and gales and clouds were mingled in a common fury.

Then through the storm Auke heard an unwonted sound. 'A bell! A bell!' he cried. 'Tis some vessel in distress!' He steered in the direction of the sound.

'What are you doing?' asked Karl. 'Steer for Reval, I command you!' shouted the merchant. 'If I miss the market I am a ruined man.'

'I am for that ship,' said Auke, firmly. As he spoke a small boat was sighted, fixed on a bank. Two or three miserable men hung in the rigging.

'Out with the boat!' shouted Auke.

The sailors stared, alarmed. The command sounded to them like madness.

'What!' cried Karl, 'lose the market, ship, and all!'

'Aye,' said Auke, 'lose everything. Better so, than let yonder poor wretches perish. Man the boat.'

The men obeyed. Auke left the helm with the mate, and took charge of the rescue boat.

One by one the men were got down from the rigging, and Auke and his prize were soon safely on board again.

But the chance of the market was gone. They had missed their tide. They were in the very teeth of the wind, and they were compelled to go for shelter into the

Neva, the Russian river on which Czar Peter was building his city.

Karl was still more angry with Auke now. 'We shall be made prisoners,' he said. 'My merchandise will be seized, and it is thou who will have ruined us all.'

'Ah, well!' said Auke, 'that will have to be, then. But understand me, I would not, for all the gold in the world, have left those men to perish, and, whatever happens, we have done our duty.'

No more was said. The vessel flew along at a terrific speed before the storm, and Auke kept her head to the river's mouth.

Just one month before this, Peter the Great had laid the first stone of Petrograd. He was not yet famous, and the town he had built was quite unknown. To the new town, however, these disappointed men of the storm were, all unconsciously, making as fast as the wind could carry them.

A great stir arose in Petrograd as soon as their ship was sighted.

'So please your Majesty,' said one of the courtiers, excitedly, 'there is a large ship standing in the Neva.'

'A ship!' cried the Czar. 'The first ship to my town! It must be accorded great honour!'

Peter's boat was launched, and the richly-clad courtiers accompanied him to the new arrival.

'See, they come!' exclaimed Karl, pointing to the swiftly-approaching craft. 'This, Auke, is a fault to lay at thy door.'

Auke, too, became frightened. He had no desire to be made a slave and compelled to work on the walls of the Czar's town. He had a vague idea of turning to face again the storm, but on second thoughts he decided to await his fate with Karl.

By this time Peter was at the ship's side. Karl met him, and, falling on his knees, implored mercy, and blamed poor Auke. 'We have missed our market at Reval and have only put in here for shelter,' said he.

'Do not fear, brave fellows,' said Peter. 'You are welcome to my new port. Your ship is the first that has sailed here. From henceforth your vessel is duty free whatever her cargo. Come, enter my town and we will drink to your health and the health of your men.'

So Karl, Auke, and the crew landed.

Karl's merchandise was bought at a fabulous price, and on that day was laid the foundation of a trade that made him one of the richest merchants in Europe, and the town one of its most famous ports.

In the prosperous days that followed, Karl oftentimes recalled Auke's words, 'Whatever else, we have done our duty.'

MY WORKBOX.

THE garden's my workbox—the best one I know—
High up on the fir-trees my needles all grow;
My bachelor's buttons in hedges are seen,
And oak-trees are covered with thimbles of green.

The garden's my workbox—the nicest of all—
My threads are spun out by the spiders so small;
My worsted, for darning, I find in the rushes,
My knitting is taught by the blackbirds and thrushes.

LILIAN HOLMES.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 226.)

DICK stood alone with bent brows surveying the temple, his hands thrust deep into his pockets. He was saying to himself, 'Now, Dick, my boy, you've got to do something. Harry has had all the luck so far: he invented the ship of the desert, and that's been jolly useful, and he discovered the hall and the zig-zags. Now it's your turn: you've got to do something. Now, No. 1, which is the tower—which is the right tower?' He sat down, put his elbows on his knees and his chin between his clenched fists, and wrestled with the problem, after which he rose and mounted the tower to the left—the more ruined one, and sat on the roof looking straight in front of him. He raised his hands at the sides of his face to cut off the view on both sides, so that he could see only that directly in front. He then descended and climbed the other tower, and looked out from the roof of this in precisely the same manner. After a little careful adjustment of the hands he jumped up, exclaiming, 'Bravo! No. 1.' Then he descended, and took up his first position in front of the temple and scrutinised the stones of the tower almost one by one. Occasionally he nodded his head, and muttered, thoughtfully, 'Yes,' and now and again he shook it and barked a short 'No.' His eyes roamed over the wall again and again. For half an hour he sat thus: then he communed within himself, 'I must leave No. 2 for a bit. Now, let's try No. 3.' He picked up his stick, poked about in the sand, and drew lines. 'The great thing is to put aside the impossibles, and narrow down the possibles to one or two.' He scribbled on the sand with his stick, considered awhile, then scribbled again; and when Uncle Charlie returned he was muttering, 'That's it—that will do it. That's all right for No. 3.'

'Well,' said the Professor; 'what do you make of it?'

'I've got No. 1,' was the reply, 'and No. 3, but No. 2 beats me. I'll have it before I've done. Give me till to-morrow morning, I'll sleep on it.'

Dick's behaviour that evening was eccentric: he sat himself on a box in the tent just as he had sat before the temple, his elbow on his knees and his chin between his fists, and frowned heavily. Harry, at first, thought he had the toothache, and eyed him sympathetically, reflecting that it would be a nasty thing to have the toothache in the desert where there were no chemists' shops, oil of cloves and creosote, and dentists. 'You'll have to knock it out with a hammer and chisel, or pull it out with a pair of pincers,' he mused. Then Dick made a sudden recovery, and became studious, and asked the Professor to lend him the translation of the papyrus that he carried in his pocket-book.

'Take care of it,' remarked the Professor; 'I've nearly worn it out.'

Dick sat himself close to the lamp, and read it through three or four times, although he knew it almost by heart, and returned it to the Professor, forgetting to say, 'Thank you.' He then asked Harry to let him look at the photos he had taken, and turning them over for some time at last held one to the light, and gave such a jump that they were quite startled, but sat down again quietly

and asked Harry if he had got another print from the same negative as the one he held in his hand. Harry brought another, and Dick took Uncle Charlie's large magnifying glass, through which he closely examined it, remarking with a moment's flash of his usual self, 'to see which is the right end up,' and then fell into deep thought, which lasted half through supper, when he came out of his shell and joined in the conversation with boisterous laughter.

Harry had heard of people being hysterical. He thought that Dick must have fallen a victim to this mysterious complaint; but when in the middle of the night he awoke and saw Dick sitting with his knees up and moving his right hand round and round as if he were turning a handle, he became alarmed and felt sure that 'poor old Dick' must have had a sunstroke.

In the morning Dick's place was empty; there was no trace of him in the camp, and Selim, who slept in the kitchen, had seen nothing of him. Harry was seriously alarmed, and rushing to Uncle Charlie told his fears.

'There is no reason to be alarmed,' said the Professor calmly. 'Dick has taken certain matters on his hands, in connection with the investigations at the temple; he seems to be giving them some attention.'

Dick did not appear till breakfast was half over. He had risen before the sun and had been to the temple; he was hungry and thirsty, but he was radiant. 'It's all right, Uncle,' he sang out, 'it's all right; I've got it all like a book, firstly, secondly and thirdly, and if we don't get the application I'll know the reason why.'

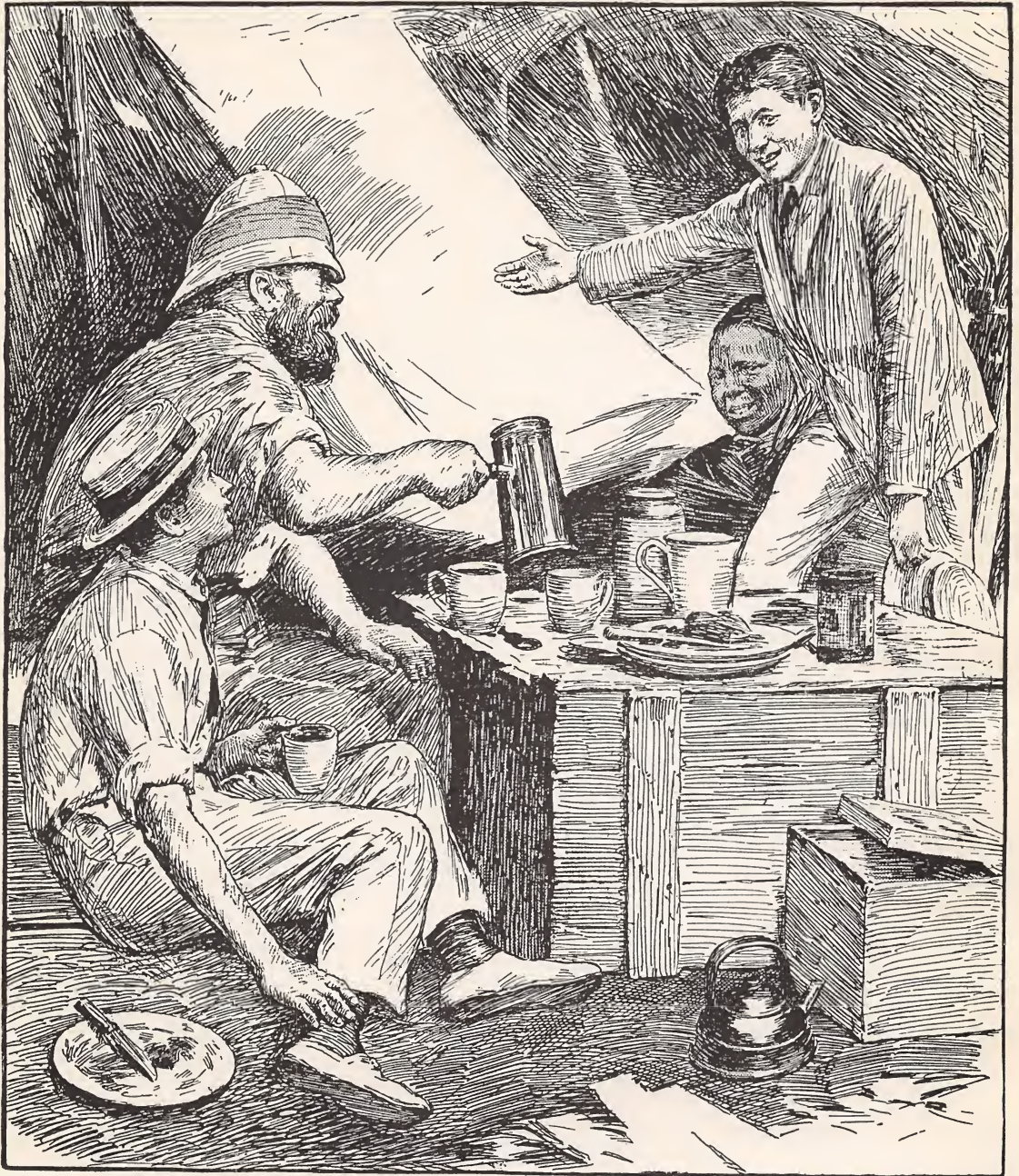
They were soon before the north front of the temple again looking up at the blank walls. Dick demonstrating with great energy, and with the voice and manner of a showman.

'Now, problem No. 1. Which of these two towers is the one containing the chamber of Tahe the Scribe? Answer—The one to the right; the one nearest the cliff and the rock temple. This is how I did it. I climbed the other tower—the ruined one—first, and sat on the roof facing the north. I placed my hands at the sides of my face to cut off the view on each side just like a horse's blinkers. Now, I said to myself, if the Scribe's chamber is in this tower it is very certain I am looking at the exact scene that he looked on from inside the chamber, and it will answer his description to a T. But it didn't. There was the same view of the desert, but a bend of the Nile came in on the right, which is not according to the papyrus. Then I went to the roof of the other tower and did just the same, and there sure enough was exactly the view described. With the blinkers up—like this—you just miss the precipice on the west, for the range of hills bend round slightly as you see, and so don't come into the picture, so to speak, and you don't see the Nile on the right. You go up and try it yourselves. So, if the Scribe's chamber is anywhere in the temple, it's in that tower.'

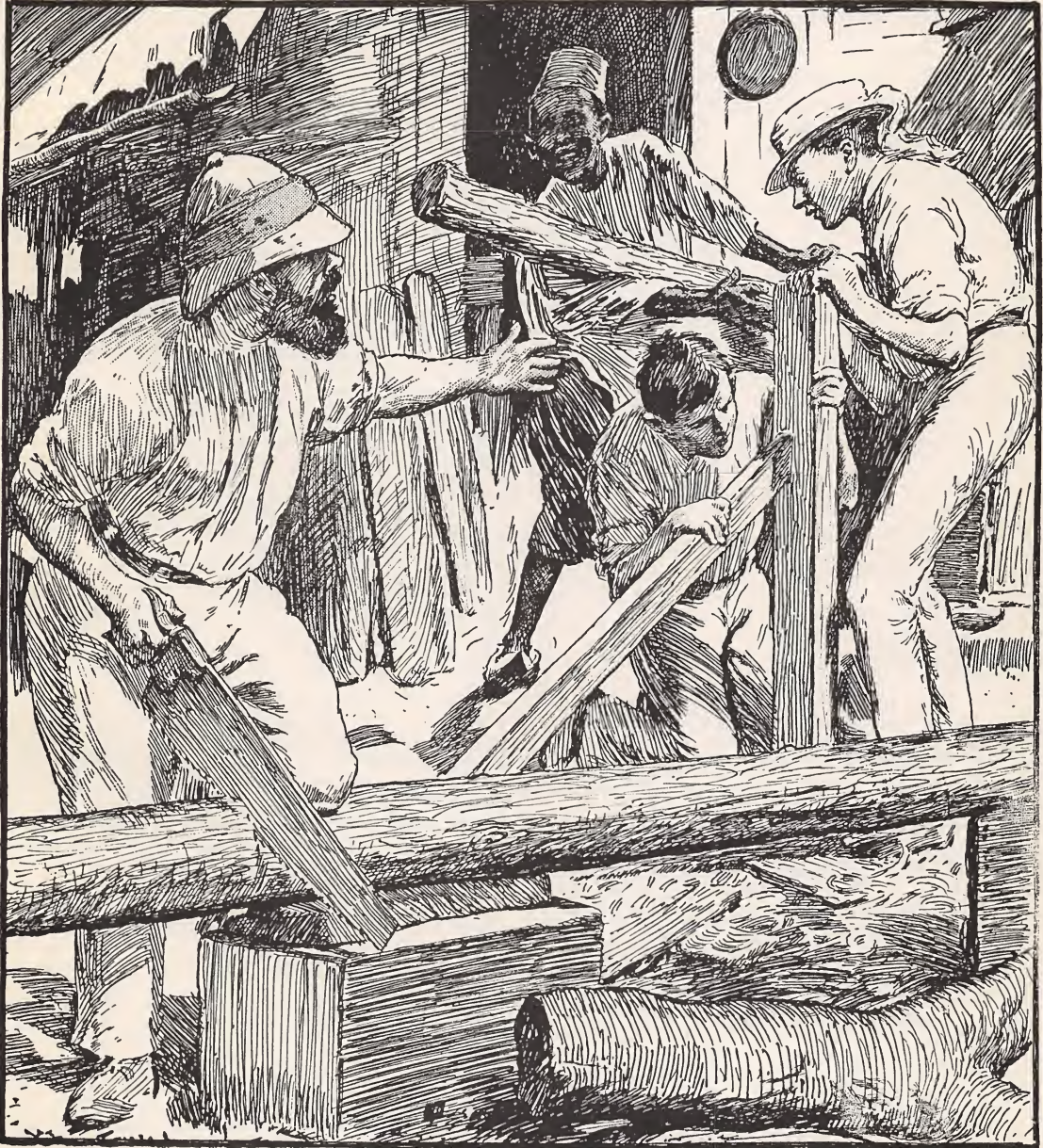
'So much for No. 1. Now for No. 2, and that was a floorer. Problem No. 2: If the Scribe's chamber is in the wall of this tower, where is it? You might say, roughly speaking, eighty square feet of blank wall without the ghost of a sign on it. Put your finger on the spot, you say. I can do it.'

Harry's mouth opened in wonder at the way Dick was coming out, and the Professor looked from Dick to the wall and back again with an expression as blank as the wall itself. Dick was enjoying it greatly.

(Continued on page 242.)



“‘It’s all right, Uncle!’ he sang out.”



"The camp presented an animated appearance."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 239.)

THAT was a floorer,' Dick repeated. 'I didn't see any way out of it at all, and it was quite accidentally I got the clue. When I asked Harry to let me look at his photos last night, I picked out the one of this view of the temple. I looked at it, and was quite staggered to see a mark on the ruined tower something like an opening. It's a little smudge on the print, I said to myself; there's nothing like that in the tower itself, I know. I got another print from Harry, and the same mark was there. This set me thinking, and I came here early this morning bringing the photo with me. Here it is, and here's the smudge.' He unrolled the unmounted print, and pointed out the mark to the Professor and Harry.

'I compared it with the tower; there's no mark like that on the ruined tower, I said; nor is there—you can see. But wait a minute, I said to myself, there is a mark, a yellowy stain, and now it dawned upon me that the yellow had come out stronger in the photograph, as it will do, and looked like a depression. Then I thought, What causes that stain? Is it lichen, or is it a stain, or is it a different kind of stone? You can see the stain there, near the inner side of the tower above the hall, and there's nothing like it anywhere else on the wall. I said to myself, supposing there was an opening there, and it has been built up at a later time with a different kind of stone, very likely it was done at the same time the gateway was filled in, and perhaps with the same kind of stone. I examined the gateway, and found there were some yellow patches there. I said to myself, Dick, if this was an entrance, it is in the wrong tower; but the two sides of a building generally agree, and there sure enough was a stain in the same position on the opposite tower; much fainter, it is true, but it is there, as you can see for yourselves.'

Uncle Charlie was getting very excited as he examined the stains through his glasses.

'Yes, No. 2 was a floorer,' repeated Dick triumphantly as he took breath and allowed time for the examination of the marks on the walls; 'I never should have found it out if it hadn't been for Harry's photo.' Dick resumed: 'Then came No. 3 problem. If the spot is found how can one man and three boys work it without scaffolding and machinery? This was not such a teaser, in fact I had settled it before I tackled No. 2. You see it is about sixty feet from the ground in an almost perpendicular wall. Well, this is how I set about it. Let's get away from all impossibilities and all ifs—if this and if that and if the other—ifs are no use. Now of course it is impossible to work it from below—it would want a forest of scaffolding and ladders, and there is only one other way—we must work it from the roof. The one man and three boys have got plenty of good strong rope and they must let one of the light-weights down—it's only about twenty feet. Let him take a small crowbar and peck away till he gets one stone out, after that it would be easier. It may take a long time and they might have to take it in turns—the light-weights I mean—and there might be a lot of pulling up and letting down, and those above might not be able to bear

the strain of holding on for hours and hours. The one man and three boys could easily make a good strong windlass, and it could be got up the inclined zigzag easily enough—if it had been steps it would have been more difficult. The one man and three boys could easily make a windlass, and there you are.'

Uncle Charlie looked approvingly at Dick, but remained thoughtful for some time, then he cried, 'Boys, it can be done.'

Dick said, 'Hear! hear!'

Harry exclaimed, 'Dick, what a headpiece you have got!'

'Yes, haven't I?' Dick replied frankly. 'I thought I was only cut out for boxing and that sort of thing.'

CHAPTER XVI.

BUSY times followed at the camp, but the one man and three boys did not find it so easy, with few tools, to make a windlass. Uncle Charlie selected a date-tree of the right thickness and showed the boys how to cut it down so that it fell in the required direction. They found the wood of the date-tree very hard, but managed to cut it into lengths, one for the roller, another to be split into lengths to form the uprights, and others for supports and the bottom planks. They had several iron rods among the articles that composed their equipment, one of which served for the axis on which the roller was to turn. Selim had to convert his kitchen fire into a forge, for the rod had to be heated red-hot and cut to the requisite length and bent at one end to form the handle. The roller had to be bored and the rod passed through. The most difficult part of the whole construction they found to be the setting of the uprights with their supports in the bottom planking so that the roller was sufficiently secure to bear any strain.

The camp presented an animated appearance, every one was in the best of spirits at having something definite to do. Barking, chopping, sawing, and keeping the fire going took all their time, meals were neglected, and as there was no wild-bird shooting the larder was empty of fresh provisions. In fact, as they had now been a month at the Oasis, their store of provisions of all kinds was running low, and the Professor was exercised in mind as to how he could get fresh supplies.

(Continued on page 255.)

SENSIBLE CINEAS.

WHEN Pyrrhus wished to go to war with the Romans, Cineas tried to dissuade him.

'When you have conquered them,' he said, 'what will you do next?'

'Conquer Sicily,' replied Pyrrhus.

'And then?'

'Oh, then we will pass over to Africa, and take Carthage, which cannot long withstand us.'

'And when Carthage is taken?'

'We will attack Greece and Macedon, and recover what we have lost there.'

'And when all these are subdued?'

'Then we will sit down and enjoy ourselves.'

'Why not do this now?' said Cineas. 'You have already a kingdom of your own. He that cannot be happy with a kingdom would not be satisfied with the whole world.'

THE DUMBLE DOR.

IN the dusky summer evenings,
When the daylight lingers yet,
Loth to leave us e'en at dewfall
When the meadow grass is wet,

Down among the grass and herbage
Sleepy Dumble Dor awakes.
Crawling out he looks around him,
Ere his evening flight he takes.

Through the dusk we see him coming,
Flying swiftly straight ahead;
We can hear his drowsy humming,
Sailing by with wings outspread.

Now he passes close beside us,
O'er the hedge and out of sight:
Could we follow, he would guide us
Far across the fields to-night.

Wide he ranges o'er the meadows
Till the twilight leaves the west;
Then, when all is dark and silent,
Tired at last he drops to rest.

E. M. HAINES.

SOME SIMPLE TRICKS AND PUZZLES.

A GREAT many amusing experiments can be made with simple materials to be found in every house, and with a little practice beforehand you will be able to surprise your friends by performing them before a party of boys and girls.

For the first trick you will want a bottle with a rather wide mouth, a threepenny-piece, and a match. Bend the match in the middle without quite breaking it in two, so that it forms the letter V. Lay this across the mouth of the bottle with the threepenny-piece supported by the edge. What you have to do—or you can let your friends try first—is to make the coin fall into the bottle without touching or blowing upon it. You must not even shake the table. After every one has tried to think how it can be done and failed, dip a pencil into a glass of water and let a few drops fall on to the broken part of the match. This makes the wood swell, and the match will gradually straighten itself until the coin is no longer supported, and falls into the bottle.

For the next experiment you will need an egg—a fresh one that has not been boiled. When shown to the audience it will be floating in the middle of a glass of water without either sinking to the bottom or coming up and floating on the top. This looks very mysterious, because most things will either sink in water, as a stone does, or float, like a cork, on the surface. The secret is very simple. The glass really contains two liquids, strong brine—or salt dissolved in water—in the lower half, and water alone in the top part. An egg will float on the brine, but it sinks in plain water. To make the brine, dissolve as much table-salt in hot water as the water will take up, and after it has cooled pour the clear liquid into the largest tumbler you can find until it is half full. Then drop in the egg, and fill up with water. Do this very, very slowly, pouring the water in through a funnel, so that it will not mix with the salt solution.

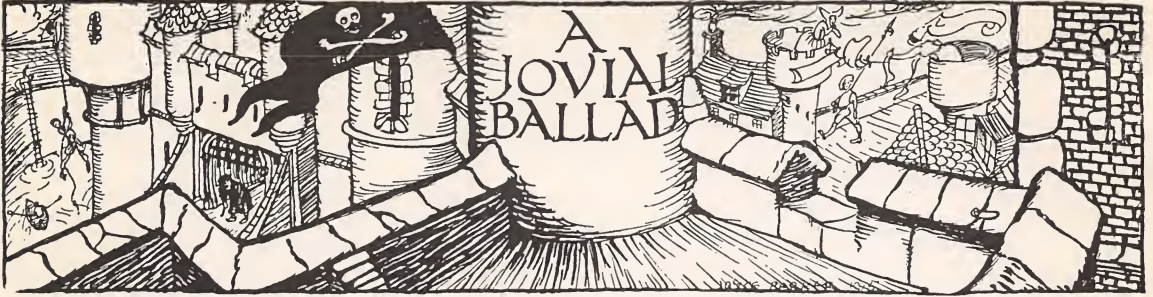
Here is another trick with an egg—a hard-boiled one this time. Place the egg in the middle of a tea-tray, grip the tray firmly in the hand, and give it a circular movement as quickly as possible, only keeping it quite flat all the time. The egg will be made to spin very rapidly, and will stand up on end. This needs a good deal of practice to do it properly.

Another trick that needs some practice is to turn a glass of water upside down without spilling any. Find a wine-glass with straight sides—not funnel-shaped—and fill it right up to the brim. Then put a square of thin cardboard or stiff notepaper over the top. It may now be turned upside down quickly, and the water will still remain in the glass.

Or, try this. Nearly fill a wine-glass with water, swing it round your head in a circle at arm's length, and put it back on the table without spilling a drop. It is not really difficult to do this, but you will not succeed the first time, or the second either. Start with just a little water in the glass, swinging it rather quickly, but quite steadily. The great thing is to avoid jerks or any hesitation. Don't practise this where there are carpets and pictures to suffer from your failures!

You know what a tea-strainer is, of course—a little boat-shaped affair rather bigger than a large walnut-shell, and covered with wires like a fine sieve. As it is nearly all holes you would hardly expect it to float on a basin of water, and in the ordinary way it goes straight down to the bottom. But if carefully prepared beforehand it can be made to float like a boat, and even carry a few coins as passengers. To do this you must get a candle-end and melt it in a tin. Then hold the strainer with a pair of pincers, or a long piece of wire bent round it, make it quite hot over the gas-stove, and dip it into the melted wax. Let as much of the wax drain away as possible, so that the tiny spaces between the wires are not covered up. If this is done carefully it will be difficult to tell that anything has been done to the strainer, but the grease will prevent any water getting in. Another experiment showing the curious effect of bringing grease and water together can be made with a cork. Cut four thin slices from the end of a cork, leave two of them as they are, and grease the other two. If floated on a basin of water the plain corks will come together, but the greased ones will move apart as if they disliked one another.

Just one more trick, for which a large basin of water and a hatpin must be borrowed. Somewhere near the middle of a half sheet of notepaper draw a circle with a pair of compasses, and make a dot to mark the centre. A square, or any other figure will do, if you know how to find the exact centre. Damp the paper inside the figure by painting with a camel-hair brush dipped into water, but keep the rest of the paper dry. If the sheet is then floated on some water in a wash-basin, and a little more water added to the part already dampened, it will rise in a shallow heap without spreading outside the circle or other figure that has been drawn. You now take a hatpin, and bring it down gradually until the point just touches the surface of the little heap of water on the paper. If the point of the pin is above the centre of the figure the paper will not move, but if it is made to touch the water anywhere else the paper will slide underneath the pin until the centre of the figure comes beneath the point. No matter where you bring the pin in the first place, it will always find the centre.



COME, CHILDREN, GATHER ROUND MY KNEE—
SIT HERE, UPON THE GROUND;
BRING ALL YOUR BABY PLAYTHINGS OUT,
AND SCATTER THEM AROUND—

■ ■ ■



THEN CEASE YOUR PLAYFUL CHAT, WHILE I
A PRETTY TALE UNFOLD
OF YOUTHS IN CLAMMY DUNGEONS PENT
AND MISERS HOARDING GOLD;
OF LEANING MAIDS IN TURRET-TOPS
WHO FALL WITH SICKENING THUD,
OF WITCHES, SPECTRES, DRAGONS, KNIGHTS,
PORTCULLISES, AND BLOOD!

■ ■ ■



IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT
(THE FIRST OF MANY SUCH)
WHEN MARMADUKE OF MARMALADE
WENT BY WITH TAPPING CRUTCH:
A WITCH AT MARMADUKE HIS BIRTH
HAD USED HER EVIL EYE,
WITH SUCH EFFECT THAT EVERY ONE
EXPECTED HIM TO DIE.

■ ■ ■



BUT MARMY DISAPPOINTED THEM,
AND, THOUGH MOROSE AND GLUM,
HE STILL COULD PLY HIS ACTIVE CRUTCH,
AND MADE THINGS FAIRLY HUM;
SO THROUGH THE STARK AND SHUDDERING STORM
HE BRISKLY TAPPED ALONG,
AND PULLED HIS FURRY COLLAR UP,
TRILLING A CARELESS SONG.

■ ■ ■



SAY, BARON MARMALADE, WHAT MEANS
THIS LOOK OF SQUINTING GUILF?
WHY FREQUENTLY IMPEDE YOUR SONG
WITH WREATHING GAP-TOOTHED SMILE?
WHY DOES YOUR DEXTER HAND CARESS
THAT HEAVY, RUSTED KEY?
WHY EXECUTE A MANIAC DANCE
WHEN NONE IS BY TO SEE?

LOOK WHERE, AT YON HIGH TURRET'S TOP,
HIS TREMBLING DAUGHTER STANDS,
AND WRINGS HER TEAR-WET TRESSES OUT
WITH BOTH HER SNOW-WHITE HANDS;
IT IS THE CHILD OF MARMADUKE
WHO MOURNS SIR CAMEL,
WHO A MARMADUKE HATH LONG CONFINED
IN DUNGEON'S LOWEST CELL.

□ ■ ■

APPROACHING BY A CREAKING STAIR
AND MILDEWED PASSAGE-WAY,
SIR MARMADUKE, WITH STEALTHY CRUTCH,
GROPE ON AS BEST HE MAY;
AND, COMING TO A MASSY DOOR,
UNLOCKS AND THROWS IT WIDE—
THEN, TURNING, WINKS AN EVIL WINK
BEFORE HE SLIPS INSIDE!

□ ■ ■

THE SLUGGISH MINUTES NUMBERED FIVE
BEFORE A SHRIEK WAS HEARD.
WAS IT FAIR ALICE IN HER TOWER,
OR FRACTIOUS PROWLING BIRD?
NO, NO! FORTH SPRINGS, WITH DRIPPING SWORD,
SIR CAMEL, AFRAID,
AND AFTER HIM, AS FLEET AS HE,
THE GHOST OF MARMALADE!

■ ■ ■

ALAS! ALAS! I MAY NOT STAY
TO TELL YOU ALL THE REST,
I LINGER BUT TO LET YOU KNOW
THE END IS FAR THE BEST;
BUT TIME AND SPACE ARE ALL TOO SHORT
TO TELL YOU ALL I KNOW—
SO ASK NO QUESTIONS, WIPE YOUR EYES,
AND TAKE YOUR TOYS, AND GO!



THE BOOK THAT WAS LEFT BEHIND.

NORAH was sitting at her desk, collecting all her exercise books for the lessons she had had that morning, for Mother had told her to bring them home, as she wished to look at them. There they were—history, composition, and spelling. Norah was glad that they were all so good—for history, she had eighteen marks out of twenty; for spelling, she had seventeen; and for composition, full marks!

Then Ethel came along, giving out arithmetic books. 'There's yours, Norah,' she said, as she passed, and Norah opened it eagerly. But her face fell when she looked inside—only one sum right out of five, and only four marks! It would just spoil all the others! How she wished that she had not seen it! If she had only gone, as some of the girls had, just before Ethel came with it! And then a thought entered her head. Suppose she left it and just took the nice ones. Three would be quite enough, and Mother could never know. She sat staring in front of her, wondering what she should do, and then, suddenly throwing the arithmetic book in her desk, she took the other three and ran home.

'Well, dear, did you bring your books?' asked Mother, when she saw her, and Norah gave them to her, feeling a little uncomfortable as she did so.

Of course Mother thought she had got very good marks. 'These are nice, Norah dear,' she said. 'I think you deserve a special treat, for you must have worked hard. We will go and spend the afternoon with Auntie—you always like that, don't you?'

Norah usually did. There was a lovely big garden at Auntie's, and she always had great fun playing with her cousins, but this time she could not help feeling ashamed, and she hung her head as she thought of the exercise book that she had not brought home.

'Wouldn't you like to go, dear?' asked her mother, astonished to find that she said nothing.

'Ye-es, Mother,' replied Norah.

Two or three times during lunch Mother looked at her and wondered if she could be ill, for she was so very quiet. She decided that perhaps she had been working too much. A romp with her cousins would do her all the good in the world.

'We need not go just yet,' she told her, as they got up from the table; 'so you can play in the garden for a little.'

Norah went out into the garden, but she did not feel very much like playing.

* * * * *

Mother was just thinking it was time to get ready when Norah came running into the room, breathless, with a book in her hand. It was her arithmetic, and she had been back to school for it.

'Poor Norah!' said Mother, kindly, when she had heard all about it. 'I don't wonder you were tempted to leave it behind; but I am so glad you were brave enough to go and get it. It does rather spoil the others, doesn't it? Suppose we stay at home this afternoon and try for to-morrow?'

And Norah, with a great weight off her mind, agreed that she would much rather do that.

The next morning she went to school determined to do every lesson well. That is such a great help, that you won't be surprised to hear she succeeded. She got twelve for her arithmetic, which was quite wonderful,

for it was the lesson she usually did much the worst. Mother thought it was a great improvement on the day before, and after lunch they set off for Auntie's, where Norah had a delightful time with her cousins, and enjoyed herself more than she had ever done before.

I. C. H.

A PAPER LIFEBOAT.

A RETIRED admiral of the Japanese navy has invented a new sort of lifeboat, which, when inflated, is seaworthy and durable, though it can be packed away in a small space of about one cubic foot. It is made of paper—of the Japanese paper which comes from the mulberry-tree, and is called 'hashikirazu.' This paper is very durable, and of great strength when the stresses are in the direction of the fibre. It is rendered waterproof by chemical treatment.

In order to make a thin sheet of paper which will be strong in whatever direction it is stressed, two sheets have to be pasted together with the fibres crossing at right angles. It is in this way that the paper boats are constructed. The first one manufactured by the admiral was merely a large pillow with a depression in the centre, the whole being inflated with air. But paper can easily be punctured; it was therefore necessary to change the method of construction. Several pipe-like bags were made, and placed side by side, at first in the form of a raft, and finally in that of a boat.

It is scarcely possible for the paper lifeboat to come to grief, because even if one or two of the pipes are broken or punctured, the boat has still sufficient buoyancy to be seaworthy.

THE PRINCESS AND THE PAGE.

Adapted from the French.

'SHALL we soon be there?' The small voice came from the depths of the big carriage which for some hours had been rolling and rumbling through the lonely country.

'No, Princess!' replied the child's governess. 'We have a long way to go yet.'

'Must we travel all night?'

'Yes; if we do not wish to be late, and so make your mother and father anxious.'

'Oh, Donna Ina, I am frightened in the night! It is getting dark now. I have heard so many stories about robbers!'

'We must not believe all that we hear,' said the governess.

But Donna Ina herself felt rather nervous, for she knew that Calabria (at that time) was not the safest of countries through which to travel.

Prince and Princess Corviani had sent for their little daughter, who for a time had been living at some distance from them. The Princess was ill, and wished very much to see Lorenza. Though she and her husband had heard rumours of brigands, they never doubted that the horse-soldiers whom they had engaged to act as escort would be brave and strong enough to protect their daughter. The Prince would have fetched her himself had he been able to leave his sick wife.

Besides Lorenza and her governess, there were two other persons in the carriage—the faithful old steward, Pabio, and Otto, the nine-year-old page. This boy, like

his mistress, was very fair. Otto loved the Princess, and he loved her parents, for they had taken him, an orphan, into their service, and always treated him kindly.

He now tried to cheer up the little girl by telling some amusing stories.

By-and-by Lorenza fell asleep. Donna Ina dozed. The escort trotted along in silence, except for the sound of the horses' hoofs, and soon Otto slept also.

The sleepers were rudely awakened by shouts and the noise of battle. The carriage had been stopped by brigands!

Donna Ina, stifling a scream, held closely to her trembling Lorenza. As for the valiant Otto, he leaped from the carriage brandishing his small sword, and shouting, 'Down with the brigands! Let us defend our Princess!'

But the soldiers were cowards. Seeing that the brigands outnumbered them they quickly ran—or rather, rode—away, leaving only the steward, the coachman, a postilion, and Otto, with the two ladies.

The boy's sword was wrenched from his hand. Savero, the robber-captain, marched off the sad little party to the cave which he used as a prison.

'You will spend the night here,' he said. 'We will give you supper, and, if you like, you may sleep in these hammocks. I shall keep only the Princess as a hostage; the rest of you will continue your journey to-morrow morning. Tell Prince Corviani that I demand ten thousand gold pieces as a ransom for his daughter, and that as soon as I receive the money she shall be restored to him.'

As Savero turned to go, a voice called to him from the further end of the cave.

'Please, Mr. Brigand, let me stay here with the Princess! She would be frightened all alone.'

'I have told you that I will keep *only* the princess. There is nothing more to be said,' replied Savero, haughtily.

He lifted the heavy curtain which hung at the mouth of the cave and disappeared.

We can imagine the dismay of the prisoners when they heard that the Princess was to be left behind alone! Lorenza implored the others not to leave her.

'Dear Otto,' she cried, 'do you save me! You are braver than all the others. Oh, do not leave me!'

'I wish we could all escape together,' said Otto.

But that was impossible, for the place was closely guarded by armed brigands.

And so the night passed, and the hour of parting drew near.

As the captives gazed sadly at the brightening sky through a chink in the wall of the cave, a happy thought came to Otto.

'Oh, why did I not think of it before?' he exclaimed (though he remembered to speak softly). 'Of course, the Princess can go with the rest! I will remain here in her place.'

'Foolish child!' said the governess. 'You would be worth nothing as a hostage. Savero would not have you.'

'I had not finished what I had to say,' said Otto, with dignity. 'Hear my plan. I will exchange clothes with the princess. We are of the same height; we both have fair, curling hair, and mine is as long as hers. People tell me that I have a girl's face'—here Otto

made a grimace—'so let us be quick! There is no time to lose.'

'He is right!' said Donna Ina, joyfully.

'That child has some sense,' muttered Fabio.

'More than all the rest of us put together!' said the admiring coachman.

Lorenza looked grave. She feared that when the brigands found out the deception they might take their revenge on Otto. It was only by picturing the grief and anxiety of her parents should she be left alone in the brigands' power that the page got her to agree to his plan.

The exchange was made. Otto put on Lorenza's frock, and she was dressed in his clothes. Lorenza made a charming boy, and Otto an equally charming girl. As the two children looked at one another, they could not help smiling, but smiles gave place to tears when Savero entered the cave.

'Time to be off!' he said gruffly to all but the false Lorenza, whose hand he seized. She—or rather, he—put on an expression of extreme terror, such as was to be expected in the circumstances, while the true Lorenza wept in real distress. It was dreadful to leave her friend to sacrifice himself for her!

Otto himself, when the others had gone, broke down and cried in real earnest.

The brigands, never suspecting that their prisoner was not Princess Lorenza, treated him with respect and consideration, in view of the large 'ransom' which they expected. As time passed, Otto felt more cheerful. It was good to think that by now his little lady was doubtless safe at home, gladdening the eyes of her sick mother. He felt sure, too, that Prince Corviani would find some means to liberate him.

Before the Prince came to the rescue, however, Otto managed to liberate himself. He had made friends with one of the brigands, a youth named Pietro. When hard-pressed by poverty, Pietro had thoughtlessly joined the band, but now he repented, and longed to get away from his wicked companions.

Otto told Pietro that if he would help him to escape, and would go with him, he could promise the Prince's protection.

So Otto's new friend brought him the clothes of a shepherd-lad. In this new disguise, and guided by Pietro—who knew all the foot-paths and 'short cuts'—the page passed safely through the forest.

On its further side the runaways met the Prince's messengers on their way to Savero: so anxious was Prince Corviani for the safety of the boy who had rendered such good service to his beloved daughter that he had sent in full the ransom-money demanded for the Princess.

This proof of his master's affection for him made Otto very happy. At the same time, he was glad that by his flight he had saved the Prince this expense.

'Let us take the money back to the palace!' he said gaily, after he had told his story to the messengers.

When Lorenza saw Otto, she flung her arms around him, and kissed him again and again. Then he was taken to Princess Corviani, who also embraced him, and thanked him warmly.

'Now, my dear child,' said the Prince, 'you shall be no longer Lorenza's page; you shall be her brother and our son.'

Pietro was taken on as a servant at the palace, where his conduct was excellent.

E. DYKE.



“‘Time to be off!’ he said, gruffly.”



"Having posted a sentinel outside, the officer in command explained."

THE ARISTOCRAT STONE.

From the French of Eugenie Foa.

IT was a close, dark evening towards the end of the month of August, 1794, and several peasants sat talking together in a cottage some distance out of the little village of Guerande. Like most of the small dwellings in the Basse-Bretagne it had no windows, and the light was only admitted through the door. Men and animals shared this large room, and five little children played happily on the steps.

The four people in the cabin were Petitot, the owner, his fat little wife Monique, old Jeanne, his mother, and the tax-collector of Guerande, who was the local doctor as well.

On a table in the middle of the room a large tureen of cabbage soup was steaming. Beside it, spread on the table itself, was a thick porridge made of black bread and buttermilk—a broth very popular with the Breton peasants. A pitcher of water, some earthenware porringers, and pewter spoons were laid in readiness for the meal.

'Are you expecting any one else, Mere Monique?' asked the tax-collector, casting a hungry glance at the table.

'No, monsieur, our number is complete, and we shall have supper as soon as my husband has finished cleaning his gun.'

'In times like these we may expect to be called on any moment to serve our country, so I always keep my gun loaded,' answered her husband, quietly. 'But it is finished now, and we may have supper whenever you wish, wife.'

Without further delay the good woman called in her children, and four boys and one girl obeyed her summons.

The whole party sat down to table, and began eating with the healthy appetites of hard-working people living much in the open air; but the eldest little boy, who was about eleven years of age, seemed to be only nibbling at his food. The old grandmother noticed this, and asked, 'Are you ill, Paul?'

'No, Grandmother,' the child answered, briefly.

'Then why don't you eat?'

'I'm not hungry, Grandmother,' replied the child, shyly.

'You're a sneak, Paul!' cried the little girl.

'Why do you call your brother a sneak, Marie?' asked her father in surprise.

'Because he pretends not to be hungry at table, and then goes to eat his supper by himself on the aristocrat stone,' Marie answered, promptly. 'I saw him do it the last moonlight night.'

Paul, who was generally very pale, flushed crimson, and repeated stupidly, 'You saw me?'

'Yes, I saw you; it was a Sunday—let me think—about nine days ago,' she added, triumphantly, having counted up the days on her fingers. 'You said, "I'm not hungry;" and as soon as Mother had turned her back, you took up your porringer, and ran away as fast as your legs could carry you. I wanted to follow you, but when I saw you were going to the aristocrat stone, where the spirits are said to walk at night, I was too frightened. I waited for you half-way, and you soon came back with your porringer empty. There, now— isn't that true, Paul?'

Little Paul had lifted his head slowly as his sister told her story, and answered readily, 'Well, what

harm is there in eating my supper on the aristocrat stone?'

'What is the aristocrat stone?' asked the tax-collector, who seemed deeply interested in Marie's tale. 'I have been a month in the village, but I never heard of it before.'

Monique laughed, and answered instantly, 'It's a very large flat stone down yonder at the end of the path leading to Guerande, and as the rock has never stirred for lord or peasant, it is called the aristocrat stone. That is the whole story.'

'But the little girl says the spot is haunted,' went on the tax-collector.

'My good sir, it is the story. Spirits appear there, some say—I don't know exactly what. Little Paul could tell you if he wished, but the dear child has probably vowed to keep silence. See how pale he is.'

'Please explain yourself more clearly, my good woman,' asked the tax-collector, looking from the old dame to her son, and beginning to scent a mystery.

'Yes, Mother, tell us exactly what you mean,' pleaded Monique, with fear in her eyes. 'Is it Paul you are afraid of? Why did you not tell me this before? I put down his paleness to want of appetite.'

'Really, Mother, I have never seen a ghost in my life,' Paul said, consolingly, though he smiled strangely.

'Don't tell stories, Paul,' put in Marie, severely. 'One evening, at the end of last winter, there was a very thick fog, and I couldn't even see the tip of my nose. Mother sent me to find you. As I came near the aristocrat stone I heard your voice quite plainly, and some one answered you in a queer, hoarse tone. Then a large shadow seemed to pass in front of me, and I was terrified. I screamed, and you came running up to ask what had frightened me. I told you what I had seen, and you answered in a thick, strange voice, "Don't talk about what you saw or heard to any one, little sister; I was only speaking to a ghost." Isn't this true, Paul?'

'Yes, but I was only making fun of you,' said the boy, calmly.

Just then the watch-dog began to bark loudly, and put a stop to further discussion. The little party grew alarmed, for every sound might spell danger in those troubled times. The father went to find out the cause of the disturbance, and saw several men in uniform coming up to the door. Having posted a sentinel outside, the officer in command explained the reason of the visit.

'Citizen, we have some ground for believing that the former owner of the castle is hidden in these parts. We have searched all the dwellings except this cottage: so you will please allow us to do our duty here, good people.'

'Certainly, citizen,' answered the peasant, respectfully.

In the confusion caused by the soldiers' entrance, Paul got up, took his porringer in his hand, and went to the door.

'Where are you going, my little man?' asked the sentinel, when he saw the child trying to pass.

'Can't you see? I want to eat my supper out-of-doors,' replied Paul in surprise.

'No one is to leave the cabin now,' said the sentinel, as he barred the passage; so poor Paul had to stay indoors for the rest of the evening.

As soon as it was light next morning, little Paul got up before any one was stirring, and taking his untasted supper with him, peeped cautiously out of the door. Seeing the sentinel was no longer at his post, the child closed the door very gently, and ran quickly across the field to the path which led to the aristocrat stone. When he reached it he stopped for a moment, and looked anxiously around him. He then went nearer the stone, touched it, and it turned round. As it did so, a flight of steps was revealed leading down to a cave beneath. Paul slipped very swiftly into the opening and touched a spring, which made the stone move back to its former place. It took far less time to work this change than it does to tell it. In a few seconds he stood in a grotto, and a man hurried forward eagerly to meet him, saying, 'I was afraid you were never coming here again.'

'I could not come last night, monsieur, because the Blues were searching our cabin, and the sentry would not let me pass, so I am very sorry the soup is cold.'

'But tell me, dear child,' asked the stranger, when he had eaten a little of the soup, 'how you first learned a secret which was known only to owners of the castle—I mean the revolving rock.'

'Quite by chance, monsieur,' answered Paul. 'Two months ago I was playing one evening on the stone overhead, and to my surprise I felt it move. Then I saw our old cure, whom we all believed dead, walk out from under it. When he noticed me he cried in horror, "It is all up with me now!" Then he told me he was hiding there, because he would be guillotined if the Blues found him; and he ended by saying, "But it is folly to think that a child of your age could keep such a secret." I said, "I am going to show you that I can keep a secret, monsieur le cure." And I kept my word. He stayed a month hidden there, and I grew as thin as a whipping-post.'

'Because you found it such hard work to keep the secret,' said the stranger, smiling.

'No, because I brought him my supper every evening,' Paul replied, simply.

'Then I am to blame also for your thinness, Paul, and I won't eat any more of your food, though you are very good to bring it to me.'

'But I can run about, and find something to eat in the fields, monsieur, while you are always shut up here. If you didn't eat my supper, and part of my breakfast, you'd die of hunger.'

The stranger fixed his eyes on the child's face, and saw in his pallor the generosity of a brave nature. Then he spoke to little Paul as gravely as he might have done to the boy's father. 'Paul, as you know already, I was once the owner of the castle of Guerande, and I must stay twenty-four hours longer hidden here, but to-morrow I shall be free to leave. Eight days later I shall be far away from here. If you come to the grotto then, you will find gold enough to buy out your little farm in a bag under the third large stone opposite. You will take the money to your father, and tell him how you came by it. But you must wait for a week after I've left—you quite understand, a full week.'

'Yes, monsieur, I will do exactly as you wish, and I must say good-bye now. My mother will miss me, and may send some one to look for me.'

The stranger kissed the child fondly, and watched him with loving eyes as he went away. When Paul had reached the top of the stairs, and put the stone back in its place, he saw to his horror a soldier com-

ing towards him. The man smiled pleasantly, as if he thought he had found a prize, and said encouragingly, 'I'm going to take you prisoner, little man. There is an aristocrat hidden somewhere near here, and if you can find him I will give you this bright gold piece.'

'There may be one, sure enough, but I don't know his hiding-place,' answered little Paul, with the sweetest smile. 'But there are many hollow trees in the wood, and people say that aristocrats are hidden in every trunk.'

'Well, just let me see these trees, my boy.'

'Oh, no, citizen; I'm far too frightened of aristocrats. People say they are so dreadfully wicked, they might kill me.'

'I'm not sure that you're not making fun of me,' said the soldier, shaking his head wisely. 'What were you doing just now at the aristocrat stone? I warn you that I am keeping a sharp eye on you.'

'You wish to know what I was doing there? Well, just see!' answered Paul, coolly making a trumpet of his hands. Then he shouted, 'Hullo! Marie, Leon, Victor, and Henri, the aristocrat stone is home!'

At Paul's call the other children ran up, eager for a game.

'Go and look for the aristocrat yourself,' cried the boy to the soldier. 'We will go on with our game of hide-and-seek when you have done.'

The soldiers lost no time in searching the wood thoroughly, but they were obliged to return to Guerande without having found the aristocrat.

A week later Paul carried a large bag of money to his father, and told him the whole story of the last few months. When the old grandmother heard of Paul's doings her only remark was, 'Now we know what made you so thin, Paul.'

'This will soon fatten me up, Grandmother,' answered the boy, gaily striking the money-bag with his little hand.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

8.—TRANSPOSITIONS.

1. Transpose one covering for the foot, and find another.
2. Transpose a means of impression, and find exchange and barter.
3. Transpose a flowing dress, and find some one very tedious.
4. Transpose a water-fowl, and find a continuous narrative.
5. Transpose carnivorous diet, and find something rather mild.
6. Transpose a famous early surgeon, and find a bright spirit.
7. Transpose a good friend, and find a great deal.

C. J. B.

(Answer on page 283.)

ANSWER TO ACROSTIC ON PAGE 211.

Dickens.

D avid.
I gnatius.
C atherine.
K atherine.

E dward.
N icholas.
S ebastian.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

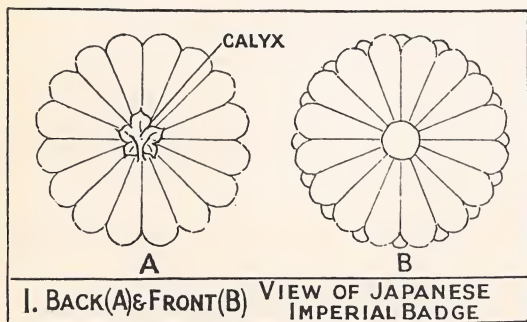
VIII.—THE CHRYSANTHEMUM OF JAPAN.

DO any of you know this saying?—'Let the Emperor live ever. May he see the Chrysanthemum Cup go round autumn after autumn for a thousand years.' Here we have a sort of toast to the Mikado of Japan, and it introduces the national flower of the country. You must know that the Japanese are very devoted to flower festivals; they have the Plum, the Cherry, Tree-peony, Wistaria, Iris, Lotus and Maple—each in its season of flowering, and the Chrysanthemum Festival, the greatest, is in November, when they are in full bloom. It is the greatest festival, because the Chrysanthemum, the 'Kiku,' is one of the two Imperial badges of Japan. The other is 'Kiri' (Paulowna Imperialis), a flower somewhat like our purple foxglove.

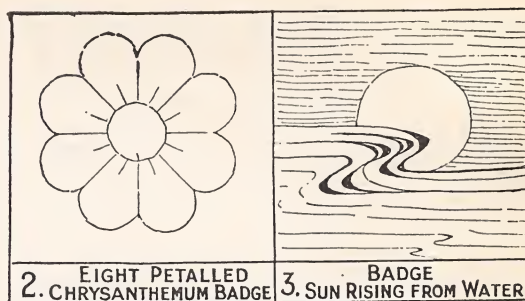
During the Festival the Emperor's Chrysanthemum Gardens at Tokyo are open to the public, and a very wonderful sight they must be; there are armies of blooms everywhere, which have been coaxed to grow in the most extraordinary shapes, such as men, bridges, castles, and so on. One big one is in the shape of a junk (a native boat)—it is a perfect model, and is fifteen feet long, and ten feet high, carrying as many as four hundred pink blooms. Mrs. Hugh Fraser, in her very interesting book, entitled, *A Diplomatist's Wife in Japan*, gives a full description of a visit to these gardens.

They have grown chrysanthemums in Japan for perhaps five thousand years, and they first came to Japan from China. We, in England, did not think much about them till about 1858, when Japan began to be recognised as a coming country, and examples of her art arrived in this country. In 1764 one Miller grew some in Chelsea Botanical Gardens, but no one took much account of them.

Now the sixteen-petalled chrysanthemum is the form of the Imperial Badge, the 'Kiku,' and I show you a back and front view of it in fig. 1. You see it is very stiff and conventional, not much like a flower; but, of course, it is purely for heraldic purposes. There is also an eight-petalled form, which is often embroidered on the garments of retired Emperors (fig. 2).

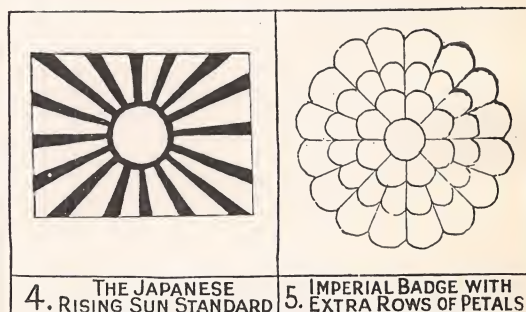


As a matter of fact, there is a great difference of opinion as to whether this badge is really intended for a chrysanthemum at all, for some think it is developed from the rising sun. There are certainly arguments in favour of this theory, as, for instance,



the fact that in some very early representations the badge is shown as a disc rising from water, which is not exactly a likely position for a chrysanthemum (fig. 3), but might be the sun. The Japanese name of Japan is 'Nippon,' which means 'Land of the Rising Sun,' and you know their flag is a rising sun (fig. 4). The divisions, too, might represent the sun's rays. Then, again, the Imperial Family of Japan claim to trace their descent to the Sun Goddess, so that is another argument in favour of the sun theory.

The emblem was sometimes further divided by having three radiating circles of 'rays' or 'petals,' as the case may be (fig. 5). Then there is an ancient



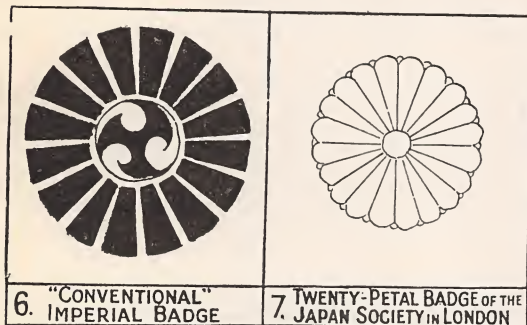
legend which seems to favour the flower theory, though it comes from China—but so did the chrysanthemum. The flower is supposed to contain the power of preventing people from getting old. The legend, which is dated 947 B. C., concerned one Kiku Jido, a youth who for some reason died in exile. He used to write strange inscriptions on chrysanthemum leaves, and the possession of these caused the people who lived around him to live to a great age—some say as long as eight hundred years! This young man is often represented in Japanese art as holding chrysanthemum leaves and a writing-brush (you know the Japanese write with brushes, not pens or pencils). Undoubtedly the Japanese are very devoted to the chrysanthemum, because they often name their children after it, thus—'O Kiku San,' which, being translated, means 'The Honourable Miss Chrysanthemum'—just as we name people Rose or Lily.

In all ages the Japanese have used the chrysanthemum very largely in their artistic decorations. A very learned professor has noted the date of its ap-



ENJOYING HIS WORK

pearance in Japanese art as A.D. 937 on a lacquer box, in a design with cranes and a tortoise. A special feature about their use of it is that, although it appears in every conceivable article, yet the artists never allow it to lose its beauty or its botanical truth. It is not presented absolutely naturally, but its 'conventional' treatment is so masterly that it always seems natural. This wonderful grasp of the whole art is nothing but true genius. The conventional treatment of the Imperial Badge is sometimes very elaborate, as shown in fig. 6; but as a general



rule it is as simple as possible. Whether it be developed from flower or rising sun, it was undoubtedly chosen because it could be so easily simplified, and was thus capable of being reproduced in any material. A badge requires to be easily recognised, even at a distance, and not likely to be confused with any other sign or symbol. In Japan you see this sixteen-petalled chrysanthemum everywhere on objects belonging to the Imperial Family. It is carved in granite and stone. It is beaten in brass—it appears in crystal, jade, ivory, bone, and wood—it is painted, modelled, woven, and embroidered. There is a helmet which belonged to one Toshiye, dated 1190 A.D.—and also a sword on which it is engraved, which belonged to the Emperor Go Toba, very likely forged by himself, and dated in the twelfth century.

Most of the information I have put in this article was supplied to me by the Japan Society in London from the Transactions of the Society, and I am greatly indebted for this help. The Society has for its crest a chrysanthemum with twenty petals (fig. 7), not sixteen, as they would not presume to use the badge which is reserved for the use of the Imperial Family and the Government Departments.

E. M. Barlow.

FLY AWAY, LADY-BIRD!

FLY away! fair Lady-bird!

With the coral wings,
Perched upon the red rose-tree,

While the blackbird sings;
Oh! his song rings clear and sweet

When the summer's new,
But it would be very sad
If he dined on you!

Fly away, my Lady-bird!

See, the rain-drops fall,
Hear the pitter-patter soft
On the ivied wall,

You will spoil your pretty dress,
Daughter of the sun,
Fly away, my Lady-bird,
Till the rain is done!

Fly away, my Lady-bird!

With the spots of jet
On your gleaming scarlet back
Very trimly set;

From my finger take your flight,
Let me clearly see,

If from North, South, East, or West,
Comes good-luck to me!

Maud E. Sargent.

VIPER-CATCHERS.

THE viper is our only venomous snake, and its bite, though it rarely proves fatal, is serious, causing a great deal of pain and inflammation, and more or less general illness. The commoner ringed-snake is quite harmless. The viper may be distinguished in various ways. It is duskier, and less strikingly marked than the ringed-snake; its head is broader, and more like the barb of an arrow; its tail is less slender; and it prefers dry, sandy, and chalky places, while the ringed-snake rather likes wet hedge-rows, ditch-banks, and marshy ground.

In days gone by, when vipers were commoner than they are now, many men used to follow the occupation of viper-catcher. There was an old belief that broth made from vipers was a strength-giving medicine for various illnesses. The broth seems to have been made by boiling the whole snake in water. Another preparation from the fat of the viper was considered to be good for weak eyes and inflamed eyelids. There was also a 'wine of vipers,' which was very highly esteemed. The makers of these broths and wines were quacks, who really knew little or nothing about the illnesses which they pretended to cure; but a great many people believed in their quackery and their medicines, and so there was a demand for vipers. In the reign of Queen Anne a dealer advertised a 'parcel of living vipers, fresh taken, fat and good,' which were to be sold by the dozen; and the medicines which were made from vipers are also advertised in the newspapers of that time.

The quack-medicine makers insisted upon having the vipers alive. Goldsmith tells us that the viper-catchers seized the snakes by the end of the tail with wooden tongs, and that this could be done without danger of being bitten, because a snake held in this way could not wind itself up to reach or strike at the holder. But many men went to work without tongs. Some of them may have used cords with nooses and sticks of various kinds. A Yorkshireman, who used to hunt for vipers in the district of Hatfield Chase, near Doncaster, carried nothing but a stout stick and an old stocking into which he put the snakes when he had caught them. It required, no doubt, a good deal of skill to capture them without being bitten, but it was perhaps not such a dangerous occupation as it appears at first sight. This man would sometimes turn out the snakes which he had caught, and let them crawl on the flags of the churchyard in the warm sun, in order to revive them. He cannot have had much fear of being bitten, or he would not have put himself to the

trouble of catching them again, as he had to do, when they had enjoyed their bask in the sunlight.

Viper-catchers were, of course, bitten sometimes. When this happened they rubbed the wound with olive oil, a flask of which they always carried with them. The Rev. Gilbert White mentions this remedy in his *Natural History of Selborne*, and, indeed, nearly every writer on the subject of viper-catching refers to it. Olive oil appears to have been very effective, and those who made use of it rarely suffered any ill effects from the bite. The oil was more effective, it is said, when it was made hot.

W. A. Atkinson.

HOME-MADE FABLES.

I.—THE SNAILS AND THE SKYLARK.

'YOU are not in a hurry, I hope,' said the smaller of two Snails to the other, as they met upon a stone a few inches above the level of the meadow. 'Scarcely,' was the reply. 'What need ever to be? However far we may be abroad, we are always the same distance from home, and herein we are unique.'

'True, and neatly put,' said the speaker. 'What marvellous creatures we are, and how privileged beyond all others! I like to meet one of ourselves; it enables me to appreciate at a glance the superiority of our species. But there is one curious drawback about our condition: we can never see the outside of our own houses. This makes the house of another snail particularly interesting.'

'Yes, especially when we contemplate a finer one than our own,' remarked the owner of the larger shell.

'Size isn't everything,' retorted the first Snail. 'It is often very convenient to be small. But what say you to that for a house?' He pointed with his horn to a lark's nest, which lay just beneath them.

'That loose tangle of twigs and coarse grass a house?' said the other, incredulously. 'It isn't possible.'

'I assure you it is a house. A skylark lives in it. He is abroad, as usual, gallivanting in the air. If he were at home more he would be less satisfied with such an abode.'

'He must indeed be a low creature to be content with such a ridiculous dwelling.'

For some moments bursts of ecstatic song thrilled the air. They stopped, as they commenced, suddenly. At length the music ceased, and the bird fluttered down silently into his nest.

Strange that the Snails heard nothing of this delicious music. They only saw a sombre-hued bird alight upon a poorly-built and dingy nest, and the sight of it set their tongues wagging again, not in pity, but in scorn. The Lark for a while was quite unaware of their presence. Some wild flowers had bloomed close to his nest since he had left home in the morning, and his bright eye roamed from one wild blossom to another with manifest delight.

'It's sweet of you! it's sweet of you!' he murmured, and for two minutes he broke out into a soft strain of melody.

The Snails could not help but hear this. 'His self-satisfaction is extraordinary,' remarked the little one. Then, raising his voice, and speaking in a very haughty manner, he said, 'We think you are to be blamed for living under such squalid conditions. We

regard with dismay your satisfaction. Why don't you endeavour to raise yourself?'

The Lark laughed. 'It was a low, sunny, rippling laugh, music itself. "Raise" yourself,' he said. 'Thank you for your advice, but it shows how little you know me. But you, upon your part, seem to be perfectly satisfied with your lot.'

'Because we have every reason to be. We cannot ask such as you to enter our houses. But if we could, and you had taste enough to appreciate their beauty, their warmth, their privacy, you would be discontented the rest of your life. That is a state of mind for which we dare not be answerable. But we are obliged to pity you, and think it would be more respectable if you stayed at home more.'

The Lark looked at them, and his beautiful eye spoke eloquently before he uttered a word. At length he broke the silence. 'You spoke of my being denied the privilege of inspecting your houses. My home lies a long way off for snails. It is heaven's portal above the clouds, where the storm and stress are beneath me, and nothing ever veils the sun. I live by the hour where I catch gleams of the gates of pearl and the streets of gold, and where the angels teach me to sing, although my song is but a faint echo of theirs. You wonder why I condescend to this lowly nest. It is that I may teach others that the best things are out of sight of earth. I ascend again in the morning at that hour of hours when the dawn blushes at the first kiss of the sun, the sight of which I would not miss for a lifetime spent in your confined houses, however grand they be. If you want to know where I live come with me to-morrow; my wing is strong enough to bear both of you.'

'Nay! nay!' exclaimed both the Snails together, withdrawing instantly within their shells. 'He is a poor, deluded fool,' the Skylark heard one of them say before disappearing.

T. T. Read.

RIDDLES FROM RUSSIA.

RUSSIAN peasants are great at riddles—put into the form of simple statements. Here are a few. 'I am blind, but show others the way; deaf and dumb, yet I know how to count.' The answer is, 'A milestone.'—'It neither barks nor bites, yet it keeps you out of the house.' Answer: 'A lock.'—'It has neither eyes nor ears, yet it leads the blind.' Answer: 'A walking-stick.'—'I have four legs, and feathers, yet am neither beast nor bird.' Answer: 'A bed.'—'Four brothers run side by side, but never catch one another up.' Answer: 'The wheels of a cart.'—'If I eat grass, my teeth grow blunt; chewing iron, they grow sharp again.' Answer: 'A scythe.'—'There are four brothers under one hat.' Answer: 'The legs of a table.'—'Two brothers who live on opposite sides of the road, yet never see one another.' Answer: 'Your eyes.'—'Something that can't be caught, though you see it very close to you.' Answer: 'Your shadow.'

Then there are what we should call 'catches'—like 'A pack of wolves ran by. One was shot; how many remained?' Answer: 'One.'—'There was a party made up of a brother and sister, a man and his wife, and two brothers-in-law; how many were there in all?' Answer: 'Three.'—'A peasant bought four scythes for a sovereign. What will each come to?' Answer: 'The ground.'

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By William Rainey.

(Continued from page 242.)

THIS shortage led to an adventure which, if Selim's account is to be received literally, must have been a thrilling experience. When the windlass was nearing completion and work was slackening, Uncle Charlie, with some hesitation, entrusted his gun to Selim, and gave that young man a day off with instructions to see what he could do at the Dismal Swamp in the way of replenishing the larder. Selim did so well that he sent him the next day.

Whether it was because he had no luck at the Dismal Swamp on this occasion, or whether he had a preconceived plan in his mind, is not clear, but certain it is, from the emptiness of his bag at his return on the eventful day, he had not remained long, either at the Dismal Swamp or at the head of the creek where the felucca lay and where the birds were most plentiful, but had lost little time in hastening to the haunts of more exciting game. In fact, the sight of the crocodile of Crocodile Creek had had a fascinating effect on him and had never been forgotten, and when he had proposed to Dick a second visit to the creek it was with visions of making a discovery of the crocodile's nest. His narrative was as follows, and as there were no eye-witnesses it must be accepted as it stands.

'I was goin' 'long quiet, lookin'-out sharp for duck and thinking 'bout nothin'. Allofer sudden I come cross a funny thing 'long side the creek—a great heap like a 'normous anthill, ony flat on de top like a table. It was made of mud and reeds and covered with whopping great eggs, and they was all laid out reglar and nice. "What can it be?" I says; "sure 'nuf it can't be a crockdile's nest." But it was. I was lookin' at 'em quite quiet, and pickin' out one or two of the best for Mister Harry, when there was a most awful rush behind, and there, waddling up out of de water was the ole gent'man we saw when we fust come to these parts—least, I expec he's a lady. But how he did come up the bank, wid his mouth wide open and straight fur me, a-roaring and a-squirting water like a fire-injin! I was pretty frightened at fust, I tell you; but after er bit I got used to it, and could look him in de face without winkin', tho' my knees wouldn't keep still. He dash fur me wid his mouth wide open, I up wid de gun and fire straight down him throat; but, lor' bless yer, he didn't mind it a bit more'n if it had been choc'lates, so I jump round de nest out o' the way.

'He charges again, and round de nest I go. Yer see, wif his great long tail, 'bout twenty feet long I reckon, he couldn't turn round very easy, so I got plenty o' time. Round and round I goes, quite cool, and he comes waddlin' and roarin' after me. I ups wid de eggs and kep pelting him all de time, till he was smother all over like batter-pudding. Dis make him very savage, me using his eggs like that. I was gettin' quite giddy, goin' round and round, when I looks up, and there was another ole crokdile squatting and lookin' over the bank as if he was larfin' at the fun; so I says to myself, "Selim, it's time to

go," and I made bolt for it 'long de bank, and pretty well out o' bref I was, I tell you.'

The boys received this narrative with some hesitation, but certainly Selim had two crocodile's eggs to show in evidence. Subsequently Harry tried to hatch them out in the sun, but without result; probably Selim's endless revolutions round the nest had added them.

The windlass was finished at last; it was a very clumsy affair, but it worked well and was strong, and these were the chief requisites. It was with real pride that the boys saw it placed on the 'ship of the desert,' but their faces shone with something other than pride as they dragged it across the desert. It was no light work, and hauling it up the inclined planes of the zigzag passage strained every muscle; but with the aid of rollers they managed it, although it nearly came to grief at one of the corners. It was mounted on the roof, and made perfectly secure by placing large stones from the broken coping of the tower upon the foot-planks, and it seemed as firm as the tower itself.

The rope was fastened on, and a noose made at the end that would form a seat. The boys worked it up and down gleefully; it ran beautifully. All was now in readiness.

'Give me one of those small crowbars,' exclaimed Dick, taking off his coat. 'I'll soon see if it's all right about the opening.'

'Don't be in such a hurry,' said Uncle Charlie, quietly. 'I'm going down.'

Dick and Harry objected. 'You are too heavy, Uncle,' they said; 'besides, you're wanted up here to look after the windlass.'

'I can hang on a rope like a cat,' said Dick.

'And so can I,' said Harry. 'You're the leader of the expedition, and you've got to stand up here and give orders.'

'It's no use talking,' said the Professor. 'I've brought you boys out here, and if there's to be any risks I take them.'

Even Selim interposed; 'Don't you go, 'Fessor; I go down, I climb like anything.' His evident earnestness produced an effect on Dick and Harry, who ever after regarded Selim with more respect.

'That point is settled, Selim,' replied the Professor.

And now a new difficulty presented itself when the loop which formed the seat was passed over the coping. It was impossible, or at any rate dangerous in the extreme, to get into the loop as it hung below the level of the roof.

The rest of the day and a part of the next was spent in obviating this. Another contrivance had to be made—two uprights and a crossbar for the rope to run over at an elevation that would enable one to enter the sling, and then, pushing clear of the coping, descend. At Uncle Charlie's suggestion a roller was substituted for the crossbar, allowing the rope to run with less friction.

A signal cord, too, was fitted to run with the rope, so that the worker below could signal to those above at the windlass, and a code of signals agreed upon—one pull at the time meant, lower; two pulls meant, elevate; and three, stop. To work in connection with this, Harry invented a gong made with a tin can and a piece of iron as a clapper, so that the pulling of the cord gave one, two, or three strokes on the gong as the case might be.

(Continued on page 258.)



“‘I ups wid de eggs and kep pelting him.’”



“The Professor’s helmet slowly disappeared below the level of the coping.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 255.)

ALL was now complete. Uncle Charlie was about to survey the place where the opening was supposed to be. He sat in the sling ready to descend, and in his capacious pockets he carried a small crowbar, a hammer, and a couple of chisels. Dick and Harry took the two handles of the windlass.

'Give me the signal line, Selim,' he said. 'Now, don't forget, boys: one, is lower; two, elevate; and three, stop. Now lower away gently.' The Professor's helmet slowly disappeared below the level of the coping. Presently the gong sounded: one, two—elevate; then sharply: one, two, three—stop. The boys waited, standing at the handles.

'When we get into proper working order we must fit a brake to the windlass,' said Harry, 'so that we can leave the handles when any one is below at work, instead of having to stand here hour after hour.'

'Right you are,' replied Dick. 'I don't think that would be difficult—a bit of chain would do it—fasten a piece of chain to each upright and slip a link over each of the handles that happen to be down—that would do it, I think.'

There was one stroke on the gong. 'Lower,' said Dick, 'gently now.' One, two, three—stop. They could just distinguish the faint tick, tick, tick, of Uncle Charlie's crowbar or hammer.

'I wonder what it feels like sitting there, fifty feet from the ground,' said Harry.

'You'll have a chance of trying, old fellow, before you're much older,' was the reply. 'Don't get looking down, that's my advice. I tried it once over the cliff when we were in Cornwall; it makes you feel rummy, I can tell you, if you look down; the best thing is to look up and just keep thinking about what you are doing: you get used to it in time.'

An hour passed, then the gong rang two—the boys turned slowly at the handles, and, as there was no further signal, continued turning till Uncle Charlie's helmet appeared and rose to the height of the crossbar. He threw a leg over the coping, and Selim pulled the rope in.

'I'll have a short rest,' he said, 'and then I'll go down again. That rope cuts unmercifully. Boys, we're all right, we're on the Scribe's tracks. There are unmistakable signs that there has been an opening, and that it has been filled in, but the cement is exceedingly hard. I chipped and scratched in several parts to see if I could find a soft place, but could find none—it's as hard as the stone: it will be slow work, I am afraid. However, the windlass works beautifully, and the signal line, too. We shall do it in time; but that rope does cut dreadfully,' and the Professor rubbed the part affected.

'We could put a board across, and make a comfortable seat, like the house-painters do,' said Dick. 'I wonder we didn't think of it before.'

'That's a good idea, Dick, a very valuable idea. It will prevent a deal of chafing.'

The windlass and rope worked so perfectly that the Professor allowed Dick to make the next descent, and after remaining below about an hour he returned,

and gave much the same report as the Professor respecting the obstinacy of the material. 'But it can be done, and it shall be done,' he added. 'We've read of prisoners picking their way through their dungeon wall with a nail, and it's hard lines if we can't get through this with a chisel and crowbar. We must concentrate on one stone and pick all round till we do get it out; let us bring one of those small-sized picks we've got at the camp. I hit myself on the knee with this crowbar, and nearly dropped it.'

The suggestion of concentrating on one stone was adopted. The small pick was brought the next day, and each was let down in turn, and remained suspended in mid-air, picking and chiselling at the cement. The stone was large, but surely, though slowly, they were working out the cement all round it, and on the morrow they would make the attempt to lever it out. To do this would necessitate the moving of the windlass a little to one side, so that the rope and seat would hang free of the stone and allow of using a longer crowbar. They had cleared the cement deeply from the sides and the under surface of the stone, and their idea was to lever it downwards.

They worked late that evening, and the moon was up when they descended the zigzag, and passed through Harry's dark-room to cross the court of the temple. It presented a weird appearance in the light of the moon; the huge pylons rose faint and spectral in the half-light at the far end, against them stood the two ranks of ruined columns that led to the entrance, and, as it were, guarded it right and left, and the side the corridor ran was in the deepest gloom, the ground strewn with massy fragments appeared splashed with light and shade. The loftiness, the space, the solemn light and absolute silence caused one who was susceptible to such scenes to gaze in awe and walk with hesitating step as if in a neutral zone between time and eternity. It was so to Harry, who was more alive to such impressions than Dick. They had left Selim to gather up the tools: he had no liking for the temple after dark, and would lose no time in following. As they stepped from the blackness of Harry's dark-room into the moon-lit court all seemed light and ethereal, and Harry paused to take in the scene, and at that very moment a faint shadow flitted from one column to another. 'What's that?' he whispered, 'a jackal?'

'That was no jackal,' said Dick, slowly. 'That was a man.'

(Continued on page 266.)

MAKING BELIEVE.

ALTHOUGH I've not so many toys,
Perhaps, as other girls and boys,
I don't mind very much, and seldom grieve
Because they've old and shabby got
And broken, but, I tell you what
I do (it does help *such* a lot),
I make believe.

I've got an indiarubber ball
That simply doesn't bounce at all,
Or make the least attempt the ground to leave;
But I pretend it's good as new,
And painted green and red and blue—
Although, of course, I do not do
It to deceive.

My poor, dear doll, Matilda Jane,
Is elderly and rather plain,
And, as she's lost an arm, I make believe
(Quite easy, too, I find it come),
She's four wax fingers and a thumb,
All nice and comfy, hidden some-
where up her sleeve.

I hope it isn't very wrong
To make believe so hard and strong;
It's just a sort of fairy tale I weave,
That makes old things seem good as new;
While dolls and toys are mended, too,
When I apply that magic glue
Called 'Make Believe.'

ADA LEONORA HARRIS.

ONE NEVER KNOWS.

An Eastern Story.

THE Caliph Morassan was a powerful monarch, whose empire included Persia, Tartary, and India. So large was his palace, that if you entered it from the north, it took you a whole day to walk straight through it to the door on the south. Costliest treasures of every description were stored within this palace, which was one of the greatest wonders in Asia.

Morassan, like most of the other old-time Caliphs, liked to pay visits, in disguise, to his people, in order to see what they were like and what were their needs.

He made these visits on foot, stealing forth sometimes by one door, sometimes by another, and wandering unrecognised about the streets of his capital.

Morassan was a severe ruler, but he was kind to the poor and unfortunate, and some of the sights which he saw on his walks in the city made him feel very sad.

One night, on his way home, he met a poor man who was carrying an enormous faggot, which he had fetched from the forest.

'Another unlucky one!' said the Caliph to himself.

'Brother,' he said aloud, 'you must be weary with the weight of that heavy load. Your life, I fear, is hard and unhappy?'

'Weary I am every day of my life,' replied the man, 'but unhappy never, because I am contented with the fruits of my labour. May I ask who it is that questions me thus?'

'I am a Persian scribe, and have come into Morassan's kingdom for the purpose of writing its history. Will you help me in the task?'

'Gladly, if you so desire. I never refuse anything that it lies within my power to give. What is it that you wish to know?'

'Tell me first what you think of the Caliph and his ministers.'

'You ask too much, brother. In order to please you I should have to speak ill of others. Let me pass.'

'Tell me one thing at least. Is there much poverty in this city?—and, if so, could anything be done to prevent it?'

'Indeed there is much distress,' said the man with the faggot, 'and were I the Caliph I would arrange things in such a manner that by to-morrow it would be impossible to find in the whole city one person with a grievance or just cause of complaint. But I am not the Caliph, so what's the use of talking? Good-night, brother!'

Unperceived, the Caliph followed the always-happy man, and noticed the house into which he entered.

All night long Morassan dreamed of the man's remarkable word: '*Were I the Caliph, no one in this city should have cause to complain.*'

'Very good! We will put him to the test,' thought Morassan.

In the morning he gave an order, and the man of the faggot was brought into his presence. The poor fellow, ill at ease, wondering what might be the reason of this unexpected summons, did not recognise in the Caliph his 'brother' of the previous evening until Morassan reminded him of the remark which he had then made: '*Were I the Caliph, none in this city should have just cause to complain.*'

'My lord,' said the man then, 'I stand by my words.'

'Very well,' said Morassan, 'you shall be my Grand Vizier for a year. If at the end of that time I hear a single complaint or murmur in my capital, you shall be hanged.'

'And you would do well to hang me, my lord, 'or if I failed to keep my word I should deserve the punishment.'

On the following day a proclamation was issued to the effect that every unemployed person should present himself at the palace. Work, it was promised, would be found for all. Some would be employed in the building of houses of rest and retirement for the aged and infirm; others in making roads and canals.

The proclamation ended thus: 'Work being assured to all, none henceforth—except the lazy—shall have cause to complain. And as the Caliph objects to the existence of lazy persons in his realm, any one who is caught grumbling will be hanged.'

There were, no doubt, some lazy persons in the city, but this awful threat effectually sealed their lips. None dared to utter a single word of dissatisfaction.

The creation of so many new roads and canals in de trade with other countries easier. Soon the Caliph was richer than he had ever been.

Morassan naturally felt very pleased with the new Grand Vizier (whose name was Gascar), and at the end of the year wanted to keep him in his service. But Gascar, strange to say, showed some reluctance.

'Not even your power, sire,' he said, 'can force me to this.'

'Do not refuse,' pleaded Morassan; 'for I love you as I love my son Ali, who will one day succeed me.'

'Who knows?' said Gascar; 'perhaps you will survive him.'

But, after some more persuasion, he finally agreed to remain as Grand Vizier.

Several days after this conversation, Prince Ali fell dangerously ill. All the physicians in the kingdom, and even foreign doctors, were summoned to the boy's bedside; but none could save his life. Day by day he grew worse, and when he died his father almost died too, for his grief made him very ill. A learned Turkish doctor, however, was able to cure him.

Upon his recovery, Morassan wished to reward this physician, whose name was Meredin.

'I will grant you three boons,' said the Caliph to Meredin. 'Say, what shall they be?'

'In the first place, my lord, I ask that you will make me Court physician, for I wish to remain with you always.'

'I grant your request,' said Morassan. 'The next thing?'



"He met a poor man who was carrying an enormous faggot."

'The next thing is ——'

'Imprudent man!' interrupted Gascar, who was present. 'Reserve the other two boons for future use;

one never knows what may happen! It may even turn out that by following my advice you will save your life.'



“‘You shall be my Grand Vizier for a year.’”

‘Gaspar is right,’ thought the doctor. ‘So be it,’ he said. ‘I will make my further requests at a future time, my lord.’

This, as it happened, was the last bit of advice given by the wise Vizier. for on the following day, while eating a cherry, he choked himself with the stone.

Meredin, who was with him at the time, tried hard to save his friend, but tried in vain.

The Caliph was terribly upset; after losing his son he had now lost his dearest friend. So unhinged was his mind by the double shock, that he made an absurd decree, forbidding his subjects, under pain of death, to eat a cherry for two years! The national 'mourning' for Gascar was to take this very eccentric form.

All Morassan's affection was now lavished on Meredin. This caused much jealousy amongst the courtiers, who began to plot against the favourite.

One morning Morassan received an anonymous letter. 'Sire,' it ran, 'Meredin abuses your confidence; he breaks your laws behind your back. Yesterday he ate a cherry. Call together your ministers, your councillors, your whole Court. I, the writer of this letter, will be present, and will publicly accuse Meredin.'

The Caliph flew into a violent passion. 'What? Meredin, whom I have loaded with favours, dares to defy me? He shall be hanged!'

When the Council met next day, the faces of Meredin's enemies wore an expression of joyous expectancy. The unfortunate man was called in, and learned from the Caliph's own lips the accusation brought against him.

'My lord,' he said, 'those who have thus informed you lie, because they hate me and seek my life.'

A buzz of angry voices arose.

'I fear not the death wherewith you threaten me,' continued Meredin, 'but I would fain clear myself and give the lie to my false accusers. Deign to remember, Sire, the day when you graciously promised me three boons, and gave me permission to choose them myself. Two of those boons are still owing to me.'

'That is true,' said Morassan. 'What, then, are your requests?'

'One is that you will punish with death the person, or persons, who saw me eating a cherry.'

'I will keep my word; your request is granted. He who saw you shall die.'

'Thank you, Sire! Now it is the turn of my accusers.'

The courtiers exchanged glances of alarm. Everybody felt uncomfortable, and none, of course, would own to having witnessed Meredin's crime.

'Well!' said Morassan, when he was tired of waiting for some one to speak, 'since, Meredin, there is no evidence of your guilt, you will not be hanged. And now I still owe you one more boon.'

'Sire,' replied the physician, 'I may die before I claim it; but, with your permission, I will assuredly reserve it, because, as said the wise Gascar, "one never knows what may happen!"'

'SILENCE IS GOLDEN.'

A COURTIER of Alexander the Great once paid a visit to the studio of Apelles, the famous painter, where he was received with the consideration due to his rank. Being vain and talkative, he began to chatter about art, showing great ignorance of the subject. Apelles, after letting him rattle on for some time, at length interrupted him. 'Do you see those boys who are grinding my colours?' said the painter. 'As long as you were silent, they admired you, dazzled with the splendour of the purple and gold with which your dress glitters, but ever since you began to talk about what you don't understand, they have done nothing but laugh at you.'

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

CHAPTER I.

'HAVE you brought your bikes?' 'Rather! What do you take us for? Hurry up, Norah.'

So saying, Raymond Sinclair picked up certain packages that still littered the seat of the railway carriage in which he and his sister had travelled from London, and sprang out on to the platform, while the girl he had addressed as Norah followed her brother.

On the platform, awaiting their guests, were the three Railton children. Stanley Railton was fifteen, the same age as Raymond; his brother Jim was twelve; their sister Joan was thirteen, the same age as Norah Sinclair.

The Sinclairs' parents were in India, and they had hitherto been obliged to spend their holidays at school; but this summer the Railton boys, who went to the same school as Raymond, had brought an invitation from their father for their friend and his sister to spend the holidays with them at Dunford Grange.

All five now made their way to the guard's van, and unearthed the Sinclairs' bicycles, and something which, compared with the machines, appeared of quite minor importance, namely, their luggage.

'That's all serene, I think,' said Raymond, when at last everything had come to light that they could lay claim to. 'What shall we do with the boxes?'

'Leave them. Our gardener will come down for them later on; or perhaps Father will bring them along in the motor if he remembers to call for them,' said Stanley. 'It is only about a mile, so come along. I expect tea will be ready, and there will be time for us to go for a ride afterwards.'

They made their way out of the little country station, and, mounting their bicycles, rode off towards the village.

'I am so glad that you have come,' said Joan Railton to Norah, who was riding by her side. 'I have always thought how jolly it would be to have a sister; though I like to be with the boys, of course.'

'I don't think it would take you long to grow into a boy, if you cut off that hair of yours and dressed in boy's clothes,' put in Jim, who had happened to overhear the remark. 'You can do anything that we can—at least, nearly.'

'So can Norah,' said Raymond. 'That is, if you mean climbing trees, or running, or cricket, or footer, either.'

'There's Aunt Eliza,' said Jim at that moment. 'Look, there at the gate.'

The Sinclairs looked in the direction that he was pointing. They had entered the main street of the village, and now, far away in the distance, they were just able to make out the form of an elderly lady standing at the gate of a drive. The house itself was hidden by trees, but the chimneys, from which smoke was curling, proclaimed its whereabouts.

'I know what Auntie will say: "Better late than never!" when we get up with her,' said Jim. 'She always talks in proverbs.'

Norah wanted to laugh, but managed to restrain the impulse, for they were almost up to the gate where Miss Heaton stood to welcome them. She was a sweet-looking old lady, with hair like silver, and a pretty pink in her cheeks that made her look, with her blue eyes, as though she had stepped out of an old painting. She smiled at the five children dismounted, and kissing Norah, said, 'I am so pleased to see you, my dear. I hope you will be very happy here; and you too,' she added, shaking hands with Raymond, who was much taller than this little old lady. 'I have been looking out for you for some time, but "better late than never," so come in and let us give you some tea. You must want it after the long journey.'

Jim shot a glance full of fun at their two guests as they followed Aunt Eliza into the house, leaving the bicycles outside, as Stanley said that they would want them again after tea.

The Grange was a rambling Elizabethan building, with rooms in all kinds of unexpected places, and stairs in the most unlikely spots.

Tea was laid in the large oak-panelled dining-room, and the wide window-seats, strewn with books and Aunt Eliza's fancy-work, gave an air of comfort and habitation to the place. The wide-open windows looked out on to the garden, with its well-kept turf and gay flower-beds. The road was hidden from the window by tall trees and shrubs.

The travellers had good appetites, and the home-made bread and golden butter disappeared as though by magic. Aunt Eliza chatted to them and sipped a cup of tea, but she said that she would have to save her appetite up for dinner with the doctor later. 'Enough is as good as a feast, my dear,' she said, when Jim passed her the cake. 'And when it comes to that, I think it is even better.'

'We are going for a ride, Auntie,' said Joan, as, the meal over, they prepared to leave the room. 'Is there anything that you want me to do in the village?'

'No, dearie, thank you; but don't be too long gone. Norah will be tired after the long journey.'

'Oh, I'm not in the least tired, thank you, Miss Heaton,' said Norah, hastily, for she objected to being thought weaker than her brother.

'Call me Aunt Eliza, my dear,' said that lady, patting her on the shoulder. 'I am never called Miss Heaton, at least not by children like you. I am a sort of universal aunt.'

The Sinclairs promised to remember this fact, and then, getting their hats, they all went off down the drive with their bicycles.

'We will go right through the village and up the hill, past the Manor,' called Stanley, who was riding a little in front with Raymond and Jim. 'You ought to see that place first of all. Did I ever tell you anything about it?'

'No. What is it? A ghost, or something of that kind?' asked Raymond.

'Well, it is rather hard to say exactly what it is; but there is something queer about the place. We shall be there in a few minutes, and then we'll get off and have a rest.'

The cottages became fewer and fewer, and farther and farther apart, as the road wound steadily up a long slope. At the top of this they could see, a long way back from the road, the stone chimneys of what looked

like a very old house poking out between the tree-tops. Trees grew all about the place—in fact, it looked from the distance as though the house were set in the heart of a little wood. There was a wall about six feet high surrounding the grounds, that made it impossible to see inside.

The children rode for perhaps the distance of a quarter of a mile along the side of this wall, and then Stanley called out that they might as well get off and have a rest.

On the opposite side of the road there was a bank covered with short grass, and beyond this stretched a wood, extending as far as they could see. Two or three years previously the wood had been 'cleared,' and now the undergrowth was getting thick and bushy, but yet was not high enough to screen from sight any one who walked through it in an upright position.

The bicycles were piled against the bank and the five children sat down to rest, whilst Raymond reminded Stanley that he said he would tell them about the house opposite to them.

'Yes, I know,' he replied; 'I will tell you all I can, but that is not much. This place is called Dene Manor, and it is very old indeed. Some of it has been standing ever since the fourteenth century. There is a moat all round it, but of course you cannot see that because of the trees. The strange thing is that the owner of it lives there alone, with only two or three men-servants to wait on him. Of course the place is very dilapidated. No one ever goes there, and no one is ever seen coming from there but one of the servants, a sour-looking old fellow who never opens his mouth to say anything. He either pretends to be deaf and dumb, or else he is, really. I don't know which it is. He takes orders for things to the shops, written down on a piece of paper, so people never get anything out of him.'

'How funny!' burst out Norah. 'I have read of people living like that, but I thought that sort of thing only happened in books.'

'Well, it is here in front of you,' said Stanley, with a wave of his hand towards the wall that enclosed the grounds of the Manor. 'Some people think that the old chap is an inventor; some say he is mad, and that the old servant is his keeper; but no one *knows* anything. At least, I don't think they do.'

They sat silent for a moment or two. It was very quiet there. Whatever went on behind the walls, it did not give an air of life to the place, which looked as deserted and forsaken as any one could imagine. A little farther down the road were the wrought-iron gates, but these were locked.

There was a small door in the wall near to the top of the hill up which they had just come, and this was the door used by the old servant, Stanley said. They got up after a time and walked back towards this door in order to see a little more of the place, but all at once Jim, who was walking nearest to the wall, held up his hand, and said in a whisper, 'I say, stop a moment. Listen!'

They all stopped, and strained their ears to catch the sounds that Jim had heard. There was not a soul in sight, but there came to them the sounds of two men talking in low tones. It was clear that the speakers were on the other side of that high wall—in the grounds of the Manor itself.

(Continued on page 270.)



“I say, stop a moment! Listen!”



“‘I will go out and talk to him.’”

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

The Tale of some Famous Sieges.

VII.—OSTEND.

OSTEND—to all of us who know Belgium, the name suggests everything that is gay and modern, and we think of a long promenade with white villas and tall hotels, a sandy beach, where children play and paddle, a blue twinkling sea, and a blaze of dazzling yellow sunshine.

Warfare and sieges, with all their accompanying horrors and suffering, seem very far away from this brilliant and fashionable watering-place; and yet, when we turn back the pages of history, we find that Ostend has a stern and glorious story of its own.

Indeed, the modern aspect of the town is only a sign of its past trials, for a place which has been besieged again and again, which has been battered into a heap of ruins, and which once gained for itself the title of 'The Modern Troy,' cannot be expected to contain ancient buildings or historic monuments.

The great siege for which Ostend will always be famous began in the summer of 1601, and lasted for three years.

At this time the Spanish had succeeded in regaining Antwerp and the other principal cities of the Low Countries; and their leader, the Archduke Albert, determined to capture Ostend, which was the only possession left to the Dutch Republic in Flanders.

The town was defended by a mixed force, consisting of Flemings, English, Scotch, and French, the commander being the English General, Sir Francis Vere.

Extraordinary efforts were made by the Spanish to take the town, but this proved a difficult task; for, although it might be invested on three sides, on the west it lay open to the sea, and nothing could prevent the entrance of ships with food and supplies of all sorts.

The Dutch were eager and willing to help their beleaguered friends in this way; and, indeed, it is said that nowhere in Europe were provisions so cheap and so plentiful as they were in Ostend during the long siege.

It was then clearly impossible to reduce the town by starvation, but all other means were attempted, and the siege of Ostend became a kind of school of warfare, soldiers from all countries coming to Flanders in order to watch the operations and study the strategy of the opposing armies.

Archduke Albert tried to block the entrance to the harbour, but in this he was unsuccessful, while, on the other hand, the defenders of the town managed to cut the dykes and flood large stretches of the surrounding country.

There is a very curious old pamphlet, written in 1601, called *The Oppugnation and Fierce Siege of Ostend*, and in this we find that 'they of the town have cutte the sea branches, so that the sea environeth the town on the south side, in so much that the town seemeth to stand on an island.'

The same writer gives an account of a hand-to-hand combat which took place during the siege, and which is very much like some of the battle stories of to-day.

This is the story: 'The enemy perceiving them of the town to be very still, and likewise those of Sir Francis Vere's trenches to hold themselves more quiet than they had been accustomed, sent out a soldier to spy of their

doings. One of the soldiers that came from London, spying this straggler, demanded of such as were next him in the trenches: it was answered they knew not, except he came as a spy. "Then," quoth the English soldier, "I will go out and talk with him." Presently he made towards this straggler, and making but few words, they fell to blows, and so continued a good space, the camps on the one side and the town on the other beholding them and which did best. In the end they were both wounded, and so departed. The Englishman brought with him his enemy's hat, and a staff or half pike, which he valiantly won and brought into the trenches.'

Thousands of men on both sides were killed during the siege, but the courage of the defenders never wavered, and when they realised that they could no longer hold the walls, they built an inner fort within the town, and held this in its turn, until they were forced to retreat into still smaller defences.

At last, when nothing remained of Ostend but a heap of ruins, the garrison surrendered; but so wonderful had been the bravery displayed that it won even the enemy's respect and admiration.

The three thousand men that remained in Ostend were allowed to march out with their arms and cannon, and with their banners flying; and in this guise they reached the camp of Prince Maurice of Nassau, where, we are told, the leader and his officers stood bareheaded to welcome them.

In 1706, during the War of the Spanish Succession, Ostend was bombarded by an English Fleet and by the army of the Duke of Marlborough. A Scotch soldier, named John Stewart, who was present, wrote a quaint poem, in which there is a very interesting description of the siege.

'By sea and land we sidged Hostend,' he says, and goes on to relate how a French ship called the *Queen of Spain* was captured; how trenches were dug 'on the land side,' and how, at last, after a fierce bombardment, the town was obliged to surrender.

The story reminds us of how, more than two hundred years later, in the autumn of 1914, an English Fleet once more bombarded the Flemish coast, and threw shells into Ostend; only this time the French, instead of being enemies, are allies, and the war is waged to protect Belgium from the German and Austrian foes, who, so often before in history, have invaded and ravaged the country.

A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 258.)

BOTH stood for some moments, but nothing more appeared; at last Dick spoke. 'It's no use shirking it, Harry, this must be looked into; we're miles and miles from any village, and we haven't seen a single soul since Abdulla left. I don't forget what he said, and I tell you I don't like the look of it. You've got your stick, take this side of the pillars, and I'll take that, and don't make a noise kicking the stones.' They crossed the open space of the court, and took the columns as Dick indicated—Dick the inside of the

avenue, and Harry the outside, so that they both moved in the shadow as they peered behind each pillar and among the ruined blocks. Again the figure flitted in the shade from column to column in advance of them on Harry's side, and passing through a streak of moonlight revealed itself—a turbaned figure clad in white with dark patches. Both boys paused, and Dick joined Harry, saying, in a low voice, 'It's no good, we're in for it; take it at a trot,' and grasping their sticks firmly they continued the pursuit at a run. It was not for many yards, and they pulled up suddenly before a strange figure crouching behind the fragment of a column—an ancient, ghostly-looking man with big tumbled turban on his head, the folds of which hung Arab-fashion on each side, passed beneath the chin and over the shoulder. From out these swathings gleamed a face pinched and worn and hunger-stricken, and in the sunken eyes so sad and hunted an expression, that the boys felt at once they had no fierce enemy here, but one who appealed to their charity. He gave one quick glance that noted their European dress, at which the dusky face lit up joyously, and stretching forth his bony wrists and clasped hands he broke into a hurried stream of Arabic.

'Poor fellow, he seems almost done for,' said Dick, and offered his water-bottle, and searched in his satchel for biscuits and dates. The man drank eagerly and took the food, lifting his eyes thankfully to heaven, but ate it slowly, and when it was finished, the boys noted that he dusted the crumbs from his garments as if by force of habit.

As they watched the nervous fingers raise the food to his lips, Dick said in a low voice, 'What's to be done, Harry? We can't leave him here: he seems quite done up, and he's all shaking. It gets chilly at nights, too. Can't we get him home to the camp?—he could have a good warm at the fire and some hot cocoa, and Uncle could talk to him in Arabic and find out where he's going. I can't make him out. He wears the Mahdist's livery, but he doesn't look much like a fighting-man, does he? Didn't he speak some English words just now? I wonder if I could make him understand?'

Dick's idea of how to make a foreigner understand was a very common one, and was nothing more or less than speaking in a very loud voice and in very bad English, so adopting this method he shouted, 'Cheer up, old man. Feel better now? We go home'—the man repeated the word 'home' after Dick with a thoughtful expression on his face—'Nice fire, you know; cocoa—hot cocoa: warm your inside—make you feel A1. Uncle talk Arabic.'

The Arab echoed the words 'English' and 'Arabic.'

'Uncle's a good sort, you know,' Dick continued, now speaking rapidly, as if a hurried explanation were requisite at this point. 'Uncle's a real good sort, you know. We're camping out in the oasis, about a mile from here; you can have a good sleep, and pick up a bit. Uncle's an awfully good sort—he'll do anything to help you, and speaks Arabic like a native.'

At the word 'Arabic,' the ancient man launched out fluently in that language, and Dick, in self-defence, returned to his former method. 'No good, old man; not understand. Can you walk now? Come along. Take hold of his other arm, Harry, and see if we can get him along.'

The Arab arose and made an effort to pull himself together: he understood Dick's gesticulations if not his words. A faint light came into his eyes, and he mur-

mured, 'English—England—shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'

'Bravo!' cried Dick. 'Come along, put your best foot forward. Now we shan't be long. Rummy old chap, isn't he?' he added, turning to Harry. 'Let's take the short cut across the desert: he'll do it all right.'

On rising from the ground where he had been found crouching, he had picked up the shaft of a long spear, which he used as a staff to aid his steps, and when well on his feet the Arab seemed to recover himself, and the three made their way slowly across the court of the temple and among the litter of stones. They were well clear of the temple, and had started on the tract of sand and boulder which stretched between it and the oasis, when the sound of hurrying feet behind and the ring of metal falling on a stone caused the Arab to start.

'Selim,' said Harry, and the boys turned their heads. It was but a momentary movement, but when they turned again they found that the Arab was off, his thin legs going at a pace incredible to those who had seen his utter exhaustion a few minutes before. The veil of his turban streamed out behind, his white garments fluttered; he was off across the moonlit sand like a glint of the moonlight itself: he dodged among the loose fragments and disappeared in the shadows of the temple.

The boys stood irresolute. 'Well,' exclaimed Dick, 'this is a rummy go! What are we to do now? He was scared out of his wits when he heard Selim coming along.'

'It's no good going after him,' said Harry. 'If we do find him we can't make him understand enough to persuade him to come. We shall have to leave him for to-night, and see what we can do to-morrow. We'll bring some food and a bottle of cold tea along in the morning, and put it in a likely place—perhaps he'll come out and take it.'

Dick had no better plan to propose, so as Selim had joined them they returned to camp. Uncle Charlie listened to the story and thought it very strange, but had no explanation to offer. Dick pronounced it 'a corker,' and they went to bed.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE next day they were again at the temple; with them they brought a basket of food and a large bottle of tea, and placed them in a prominent position in the court of the temple, out of reach of the sun in the shadow of a large stone, near the spot where they had come across the Arab.

They started work again on the tower roof, and hoped to succeed in removing the obstinate stone that day. It had given them a great deal of trouble, but was now loose, and to their relief appeared to form the full thickness of the wall. The discovery that there was no second course of stones had rejoiced them greatly, as Dick said in mixed metaphor—'When they had got that old tooth out, it would be all plain sailing.' Toward evening the stone was out, and fell with a 'thud.' The boys cheered. They had time before it became dark to wrench out one above it without much difficulty. Uncle Charlie thrust crowbar and arm through, and met with no resistance—it was an empty space within. As it was a beautiful moonlight night, the boys wished to continue the work; but the wall being on the north



"He was off across the moonlit sand like a glint of the moonlight itself."

side, did not receive the light of the moon. The Professor thought it dangerous, especially as there might be a fall of stones as they enlarged the opening.

They returned in triumph, the Professor greatly excited. They had seen no sign of the ancient Arab—the Mystery Man, as Harry called him. At mid-day, when they ate their lunch, they wandered about the

ruins and looked into likely places, but saw no trace, and the food was untouched; but in the evening when they left the temple they found the basket empty and the bottle gone.

The next day a fresh supply was brought for the Mystery Man and put in the same place.

(Continued on page 274.)



"Piggy's first grunt sent him flying."

FRIGHTENED BY 'GRUMPY.'

THE first pig seen in a remote district of the north of Scotland frightened the people out of their wits. It was in the year 1720 that a young one was sent to a countryman who went by the name of the 'Gudeman o' the Brow.'

One day Piggy wandered away by himself, and tried to make friends with a woman herding cattle near the shore. She, however, screamed at the sight of him, and ran away, the pig following her. When she reached the village she told everybody that a dreadful black beast with horns had come out of the sea and rushed at her.

Her neighbours, alarmed, locked themselves in the

houses and barns, and although an old schoolmaster bravely went forth, armed with a sword and a Bible, to meet the monster, Piggy's first grunt sent him flying. Wherever the animal found himself he created the greatest alarm. A carrier with a load of fish heard him 'give a snork,' and fell off his horse with fright; then he ran away and hid in a wood all day and all night. When the man returned home, he declared that he had been attacked by a creature as big as a calf, with eyes like saucers, and a back like a hedgehog's. Another man said that Piggy roared like a lion, and many would not go out after dark for fear of meeting him. There was no end to the absurd tales about him.

At last a man who had inspected the pig in its own home told the people that this was no strange monster, but only the 'Gudeman o' the Brow's grumphy.' But it was some time before they understood that poor Piggy was really a useful and friendly creature, and began to keep 'grumphies' of their own. S. BRAINE.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP.

TWO youths once lived in days gone by,
Two friends whose honour naught could try
Alike in skill and warlike games—
Damon and Pythias were their names.

Now Damon, in an hour of zeal
For liberty, with hidden steel
Had sought in secret to cut down
The tyrant of his native town.

But ere his hand could strike the blow,
Betrayed by one who was his foe,
To Dionysius he was brought
And tried before that tyrant's court.

Death was his doom; but ere the word
To end his bright young life was heard,
He begged a brief respite, that he
Might once again his sister see.

'Three days,' quoth Dionysius, 'take,
If thou canst find one for thy sake
To pledge his life.' Cries Pythias, 'I
In bond for him will gladly lie.'

Two days, three nights have swiftly sped
And Damon rises from his bed.
With hasty steps across the plain
He speeds to Syracuse again.

Alas! the fates combine that day
By every means his course to stay.
The river, swollen in the night,
Presents its waters to his sight.

With heart of steel he breasts the tide,
But scarce has gained the other side,
Ere savage robbers him surround
And bear him helpless to the ground.

'My life,' cries he, 'for honour's sake
Is forfeit. I have naught to take.'
Then snatches from their leader's hand
His sword, and puts to flight the band.

And now behold the city's wall!
As on the road he scarce can crawl,
He hears one say as he goes by,
'At sunset Pythias must die!'

Spurred on by this he mends his pace,
Until he sees before his face
A gathered throng, who hold their breath
In wonder at a felon's death.

Then speaks one, 'Pythias, prepare
To die. Thy friend who spoke thee fair
Has failed thee. Thou shalt meet his doom.'
A gasping voice replies, 'Give room!'

'Tis Damon, weary and far spent,
Wounded and faint, his tunic rent!
The crowd gives back and stands aloof,
As thus they see true friendship's proof.

The tyrant speaks, 'It is in vain
For me to separate these twain.
Thus to deserve and thus to give
Such trust, doth earn the right to live.

'Had I such friends, the rarest gem
I would not rate so high as them.
Live on, ye twain! May heaven send
That I may find so true a friend!'

J. OHN.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 263.)

CHAPTER II.

THE voices died away after a moment or two. Evidently the speakers had moved off, and were not coming out by the little door in the wall.

'That's a rum go,' said Jim. 'I don't think I have ever seen any one but that old dumb chap coming out of here, but there must be some one else in there now. I wonder what they are up to.'

'Perhaps it was the owner of the place talking,' said Stanley. 'He must go out sometimes, and he has other servants besides that old man, I know, though they are not sent into the village. Some people say that he has quite a lot of men employed about the place, and that it is not nearly so dilapidated inside as it looks from here. It may have been some of the workmen talking.'

'The only thing that I am surprised at is that we have never either seen or heard any one inside there before,' said Jim, as, mounting their bicycles, they rode away again. 'And we are often this way in the holidays.'

'Oh, well, one can make a mystery out of anything, I suppose,' said Raymond; 'and a place like this is just right for anything of that kind. But I say, you said that you have a dog. Where is he?'

'Jinks? Why, yes; I wonder that we did not see him at tea-time,' said Stanley, with a look of surprise coming over his face. 'Have you seen him, Joan?'

'No, not since——' She paused a moment to think, and then continued: 'Why, I do believe that I have not seen him since last night. How very queer! We were so excited about you coming,' she went on, turning to Norah, 'that I know I could think of nothing else. Poor, dear old Jinks! Let's hurry home and see if he is there. I am always afraid that he will get into the woods. He is such a dog for rabbits.'

They all put on a spurt, and were quickly back at the Grange, which was the name of the Railtons' home.

The doctor had come in, and was now busy with patients in his surgery, which was situated at the extreme end of the house, and to which a path led from the drive.

Aunt Eliza was in the drawing-room when the five burst in like a whirlwind, the three Railtons asking in a breath: 'Have you seen anything of Jinks, Auntie?'

'Jinks, my dears? Why, no, I don't think that I have. Is he not about?'

'I know that I have not seen him since last night,' said Joan, with dismay in her voice. 'Oh! I do hope that he has not gone off again into the woods, as he did the last time, when Joe Hawkins found him.'

'Don't worry, dearie. Go and ask the servants if they have seen anything of him; but even if they have not, there is no need to feel anxious till to-morrow, for dogs often go off for a few hours without harm coming to them.'

Aunt Eliza spoke in a reassuring tone; but all the same, Joan felt worried about the dog, who was a great pet and usually very much to the fore. If he had been at home they would certainly have seen him before this. They went to the servants' quarters and interviewed Mary, the cook, on the subject.

'No, Miss Joan, I haven't seen him—not set eyes on him, you might say, since dinner-time yesterday. He worried me shockin' then for some more dinner, but that's the last I've seen of him. Maybe he's gone to look for a bit for himself in the woods.'

'That's just what I am afraid of,' said Joan. 'If he has really got into the woods he may get caught in a trap, as he did that other time.'

'Don't worry, Joan. Let's put the bikes away and then take a look round to see if he is anywhere about,' said Stanley; and the suggestion was at once acted upon, the two Sinclairs taking part in the search with every bit as much energy as the Railtons, for they were very fond of animals, and the boys had often spoken of the fox-terrier and his cleverness.

But search as they might, it was of no use. There was not a trace of the dog to be seen anywhere. At last, tired and dispirited, they returned to the house, for it was quite bed-time, and dark into the bargain, so that it was useless to look any longer.

'Your father is in the drawing-room,' said Aunt Eliza, when she met them in the hall. 'He would like to see you. He does not know anything about Jinks, for he says that he does not remember having seen him, either, though he has been too busy to notice. But he will turn up in the morning, no doubt. Just go and see the doctor now, and then you must go to bed: "early to bed and early to rise," you know.'

They found the doctor, and spent ten minutes or so chatting with him. 'I'm awfully sorry to hear that Jinks has disappeared, but if I were you I should not trouble about it,' he said. 'I expect you will find him here by to-morrow morning. He has a taste for adventure, like some of his betters, and has set off to find the dogs' South Pole.'

'Well, I hope he'll jolly soon find it, then,' said Jim; and a little while after they bade the doctor good-night and went off to bed.

'To-morrow afternoon I have to go to Chudley, and I think that I shall be able to take some of you with me,

if you like,' Dr. Railton called after them as they went upstairs.

'Thank you very much,' came back the chorus, and then Stanley added, 'but we shall have to find Jinks first, or I don't think any one will want to go.'

Jim and Stanley shared a room at the far end of the corridor from which their sister's room opened, and Raymond had been allotted the room next to theirs. Into this they all went when they came upstairs, for Stanley had a suggestion to make to the other two.

'I have an idea about Jinks,' he said, shutting the door so that the girls should stand no chance of overhearing what he had to say.

'Out with it,' said Jim, briefly, sitting down on the side of the bed and swinging his legs to and fro.

'Well, I think that he has got into the grounds of Dene Manor.'

'Why on earth?' exclaimed Jim, as his brother paused; and Raymond added, 'Yes, why do you think that?'

'Simply because there are no end of rabbits there. Not where we were this evening, close to the wall, but quite on the other side of the house. There is a wood there, you know, and the place is simply alive with rabbits. And if there is one thing that Jinks loves more than another it is a rabbit. I did not say so before the girls, because I knew it would only worry Joan. But that is what I am afraid of. There are notice-boards about trespassers all over the place, as perhaps you saw; and there are also others saying that any dogs or cats found on the premises will be shot.'

'Oh!' ejaculated Raymond; 'that alters the thing. But what's to be done?'

'I have an idea. We will get up early in the morning and go there and look for him,' said Stanley, for this was what he had intended from the first.

'Right you are. Only how are you going to wake?' asked Raymond, who had had sufficient experience of Stanley's waking powers at school to be rather doubtful of them now.

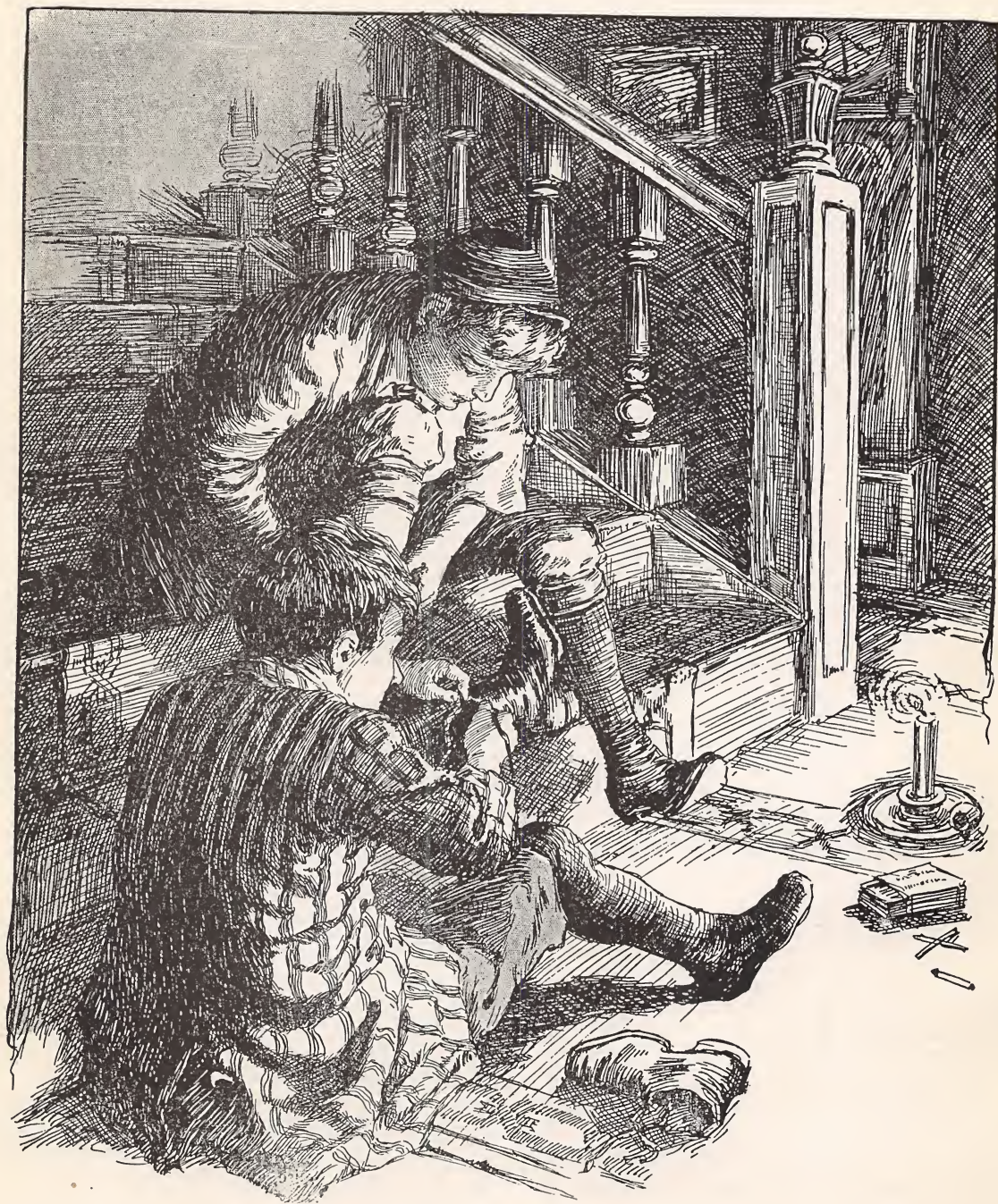
'I shall manage that; leave it to me. We ought to get off about four. Tumble into bed now, and I'll call you when it is time.'

Though Raymond did not altogether trust his friend's ability to wake himself, he took his advice and tumbled into bed, and soon was fast asleep. Jim also slept deeply. Only Stanley, with the knowledge that he had to rouse the other two, did not fall asleep for some time, and when at last he did so it was only to wake again in less than an hour.

This sort of thing continued all through the night, and it was only a quarter to four when he went into Raymond's room and roused him. They met in the hall, and put on their shoes at the bottom of the stairs, for they had no desire to wake the entire household. Then Stanley appeared with exceedingly thick slices of bread and large pieces of cheese, besides three jam turnovers. 'This was all that I could get; but it will stave off starvation for a bit,' he said, sharing out the provisions. He then led the way to a side-door that could be opened without noise, and they were soon riding off towards the Manor.

'We must turn to the left at the bottom of the hill,' said Jim, 'then we can get into that part of the grounds where most of the rabbits are. It is about a mile farther on, and opposite to where we sat last night.'

(Continued on page 278.)



“They put on their shoes at the bottom of the stairs.”



"At each side of the corridor stood an Arab."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 268.)

UNCLE CHARLIE had said he would make the first descent of the day, and thought he would be able to detach sufficient masonry to enable him to enter. 'If I get in,' he said, 'you will feel the rope slacken when my weight is off; and beside that I shall give six separate pulls on the signal cord. Don't pull up the rope, whatever you do—just wait. I may be a long time; wait till you hear the two signals to ascend.'

They lowered Uncle Charlie, and he disappeared with pick and crowbar. Presently they received the signal to stop—after a short time the signal to ascend, then a rapid three strokes on the gong to stop again, then no more, and the faint tap of the pick was heard.

'He's at it now,' said Harry. So they put the brakes on and waited, amusing themselves as best they could and discussing the Mystery Man, but still with ears open for any sound from below or the stroke of the gong. It soon came—one stroke.

'Lower,' said Dick, and they removed the brakes and began slowly to pay out, expecting almost immediately to hear the three strokes indicating stop, which would show that the Professor had shifted his position to one slightly lower down: but there came no signal to stop, and they continued slowly paying out the rope. 'Funny,' muttered Dick, puckering his brow, 'perhaps he is going down to the ground.' Dick had done this himself on one occasion, but not without an understanding with those above. 'Dropped a tool perhaps, and is going down for it.'

The boys continued unwinding till all the rope was out, and then they knew that it had reached the ground. They sat down and waited, but there was no signal; half-an-hour passed, and still no signal. They were becoming anxious. Had anything happened?—had Uncle Charlie fallen?—the very thought took away their breath. Another ten minutes of strained listening for signal or sound below, and Dick said huskily: 'I'll go down and see,' and, as Harry moved to accompany him, 'You stop here, Selim, and if you hear me shout, come down.'

In silence the two boys descended by the inclined passage, and hastily picked their way through the rubbish of fallen walls, through the court, and round to the north front of the temple. There, from the roof of the tower, hung the rope, the fallen sling and seat lying on the ground beneath, where the stones and rubbish that they had worked at from above had fallen, but no sign of Uncle Charlie—no crushed figure on the ground—a sight which they dreaded and half expected to see. They moved round to turn the corner of the tower to search in that direction, but sprang back instantly to shelter: a body of men were advancing armed with guns, spears, and heavy broadswords.

'Dervishes,' cried Dick; 'run, Harry, this way, round the towers, through the court, and out the other side; quick! make for the rock temple—the hiding-place,' gasped Dick, as over the rough, littered ground they ran,

the Dervishes appearing at one corner as they disappeared round the other. A hoarse shout broke out in the rear, a throwing spear glanced against the side of a column, ricocheted, struck the wall, and glanced along it beside them.

'Keep it up, Harry—quick—out at the other side—we're done.' At each side of the corridor beside the massive pillars stood an Arab with gun raised to his hip.

'Dodge back,' cried Dick; but it was too late. They were each in the grasp of a brawny Soudanese. Dick wrenched himself free, slid his hands up the Dervish's arms and gripped him at the biceps, threw out his leg, and with a side wrench flung him crosswise over it to the ground; but the Dervish could grip as well as Dick. He did not let go his hold, and they both went down together—Dick on top. Dick's pluck was of no use; it was not a wrestling match between two. In a moment they were surrounded by a score of fierce and threatening barbarians. They were shaken viciously, struck with the shafts of spears and pricked with their points to remind them that their struggles were useless.

The boys were dragged from the temple and placed in the midst of the company of Dervishes, who marched them off in the direction of the rocky barrier that rose above and beyond the rock temple. Their way lay for some distance close under its steep sides; but about a mile from the temple the range bore round to the west, as Dick had noticed from the top of the tower, and here the steep wall was broken by a ravine which penetrated the lofty plateau of the desert. The sides of this ravine were rent as if the earth had been split by a convulsion instead of being worn by the action of water, as was no doubt the case; for even in the desert there are underground streams which break out in places. Rocks loosened from their hold were scattered beneath, and among these and on the ragged sides grew bushes and stunted acacias, and the boys saw, as they were dragged along by their captors, that the ravine ascended gradually, but in an irregular manner, to the level of the desert. Grass and scanty herbage grew here, suggesting that probably at certain seasons a stream flowed down the centre.

Here several horses were tethered, cropping the herbage; this, and the sight of half-a-dozen men and boys cutting and carrying brushwood, indicated the near approach to a camp. As the ravine became less steep, it widened out and ended in a shallow basin in the tableland. A number of rude shelters—perhaps fifty in all—were erected here. They were made of brushwood, and covered with the dark blankets of the Dervishes as a protection from the fierce rays of the sun. The shelters were arranged in two circles round a tent of more important appearance, before which, with the upright spears that stood in front of each hut, a black flag hung limp in the still air. Groups of men sat on the ground in the shade of the huts, and on the margin of the camp some were still at work putting up additional shelters, as if the tribesmen had but recently taken up their quarters on the spot.

It appeared that below was a well of water, for men and boys were seen with swollen water-skins ascending the slope. The men were clad in the ordinary Arab dress—a loose white garment reaching to the knees, in most cases girt with a sash, and some wore white trousers reaching to their ankles. On their heads were

white skull-caps for the most part, but some wore turbans; all were decorated with the patches of the Mahdi.

In spite of the heat, their bruises and many unnecessary reminders of the presence of their captors from matchlock and butt-end of spear, Dick and Harry noticed these things, and carefully took in the lay of the land. The arrival in the camp of two specimens of the hated 'infidel' was unexpected, and aroused as much interest as the two specimens of young crocodiles would have excited in Harry, had they allowed themselves to be hatched out. The elders regarded them with grave scorn; but many of the younger men, and especially the boys, of whom there was a considerable number, greeted them with jeers, and thrust their malignant faces close to them and made threatening passes at them with their weapons in the hope of terrifying them. When they became tired of this sport the two boys were pushed roughly into one of shelters, and left with a guard standing before the opening.

Thus unceremoniously introduced into the interior of the hut, the boys, stumbling over one another, fell into a corner, and sat with their knees up and their hands clasped around them, gloomily regarding each other. Dick's face wore a bull-dog expression, and Harry had the tip of his tongue between his teeth in the way that had proved fatal to his prospects as a boxer. Their mouths were parched with heat and excitement, they were bruised and sore with the spear-pricks they had received, and the skin was off Dick's elbow from his fall with the Dervish among the loose stones of the temple, while both were smarting inwardly at the indignities to which they had been subjected, which did not accord with their ideas of the proper treatment of prisoners of war.

'We are in a nice mess now,' said Harry, in a dejected voice. 'I feel as if I had been having a bout with a threshing machine. I'd give anything for a drink of water. I wonder if those beasts will give us anything to drink.'

Dick moistened his lips with his tongue and gently stroked his damaged elbow, but said nothing.

(Continued on page 286.)

HOW TO MAKE A CARDBOARD BOOMERANG.

A BOOMERANG, as most readers of *Chatterbox* will know, is a curved piece of very hard wood which the native black races of Australia use as a weapon. When skilfully thrown, a boomerang will pass over an enemy's head, curve round, and strike him in the back. It can also be made to return to the thrower's hand.

A simple but amusing toy can be made by cutting out a crescent-shaped piece of thin cardboard—that is, similar in shape to the new moon. Toy boomerangs can be cut very well from postcards. Instead of throwing, for which purpose cardboard is not heavy enough, the boomerang should be placed on a book with one end slightly overlapping. Then give it a smart flick with a pencil or a finger and off it will go. After a little practice, you will be able to make the boomerang go round the room and return to you without touching the walls or furniture.

A GREEK FABLE.

WHEN Dædalus, deprived of feet,
On feathery pinions fled from Crete,
He took with him his only son,
In hopes his freedom might be won.

But Icarus had not been taught
To give obedience as he ought,
And being somewhat over-proud
He tried to fly above the cloud.

The tale is known by every one,
How, getting far too near the sun,
The wax which fastened on his wings
Was melted, and he lost the things.

The consequence was sad: for he
Fell into the Icarian Sea,
And so became a tale for all
That after pride there comes a fall.

Yet Icarus, methinks, did well—
At least he left a tale to tell:
For sure 'tis better to aim high,
Than never at one's goal to try.

And surely those at least have pluck
Who try, but fail through want of luck.
Let's think, when we a victor hail,
'There's courage, too, in those who fail!'

ACROSS THE WATER.

VIII.—THE BRIDGES OF PARIS.

IF we look at a map of Paris we see that the cathedral of Notre Dame and many other important buildings are situated on a small island in the Seine. It is called La Cité, and, in old time, this island was Paris itself, for the capital of France was then only a little fortified town, encircled by the river, and named by the Roman conquerors *Lutetia Parisiorum*.

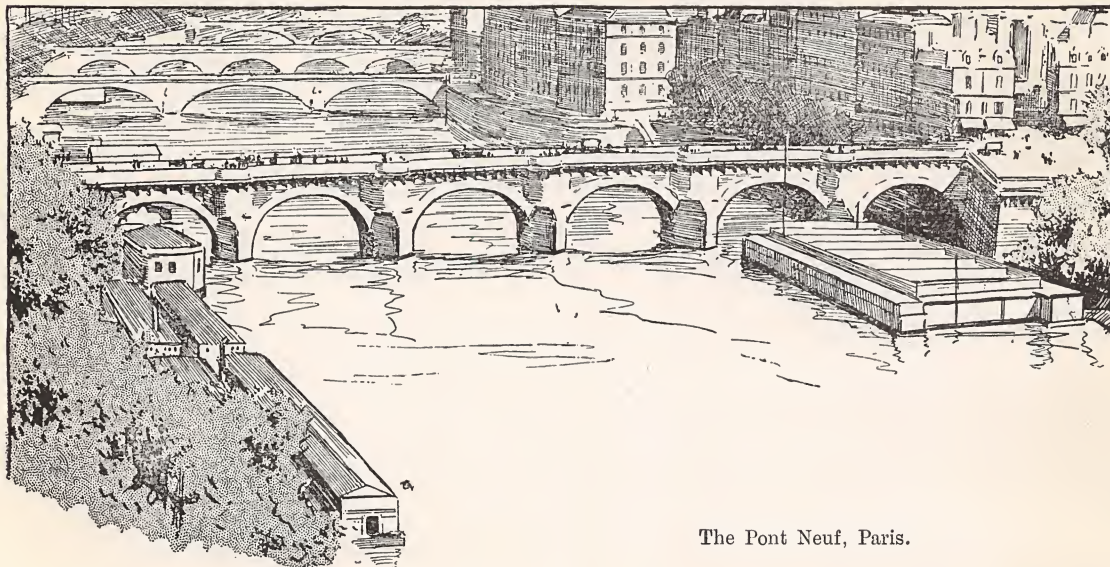
As years went on the city overflowed its narrow boundaries, and suburbs were built on either side of the river. These were joined to each other and to the island by bridges, and the bridges of Paris are now among the most interesting in the whole world.

The most famous of them all is the Pont Neuf, which crosses the isle of La Cité and thus connects it with both shores of the Seine. Although its name means the New Bridge, it is in reality the oldest bridge in Paris, for the first stone of it was laid more than three hundred years ago by Henry III. in the presence of his mother, Catherine de Médicis, and of the French Court.

At this time France was in the midst of a great civil war, and, therefore, the building of the bridge went on very slowly. It was not until 1603 that the first of the Bourbon kings, Henry IV., performed the opening ceremony. Even then it was not finished, and Henry crossed it by walking along an insecurely-fastened plank.

In the centre of this bridge was erected a fine statue of King Henry on horseback, but during the Revolution it was pulled down and made into cannon. Later on a new statue of the great national hero was made, and this can still be seen on the bridge.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Pont Neuf was the principal thoroughfare of Paris, and



The Pont Neuf, Paris.

an old writer said, 'If you are in quest of any one, native or foreign, there is a moral certainty of your meeting him there in the course of two hours at the outside.'

There is a story told of an Englishman who once made a bet that, if he stood on the Pont Neuf and offered new six-franc pieces for twopence-halfpenny each, he would not sell more than half-a-dozen of them. He won his wager, for, among all the crowds of people who thronged the bridge, his only customer was an old woman who purchased three of the coins.

Most of the other bridges of Paris are now modern, but they stand on the sites of earlier structures and retain the old names and the old traditions.

Thus there is the Pont Notre Dame, leading to the cathedral, across which the brides of the kings of France always went on the occasion of their first entry into the city.

Many wonderful marriage processions passed this way in mediæval days. We are told that when Princess Isabeau of Bavaria entered Paris for her wedding with Charles VI., the bridge of Notre Dame was hung with blue taffetas bordered with fleurs-de-lys, and that, as part of the pageant, a person dressed as an angel descended on a cord from the highest tower of the cathedral and placed a gold crown on the head of the bride.

Another famous old bridge was the Petit Pont, which joined La Cité to the south bank of the Seine, and which was defended by a strong fortified gateway called the Petit Châtelet.

Passengers crossing this bridge were obliged to pay a toll, and even animals were not exempt, for the tariff of a monkey was four deniers. If, however, the monkey belonged to a juggler, it was allowed to dance before the gatekeeper instead of paying anything. In the same way a ballad-monger might sing a song and then pass over free.

Not far from the Pont Notre Dame is the Pont Arcole, and on this bridge, in 1830, there was a battle between the revolutionary mob and the Royal Guard. The rioters were led by a young man named Arcole, who ran forward waving a flag, and was killed in the middle of the bridge.

The Pont d'Arcole received its name in memory of this incident and also to commemorate the battle of Arcole, which took place in 1796, when Napoleon, seeing that the French army was in danger of defeat, seized a standard, and rushing forward on to the bridge which crosses the Adige, urged his soldiers to charge the enemy.

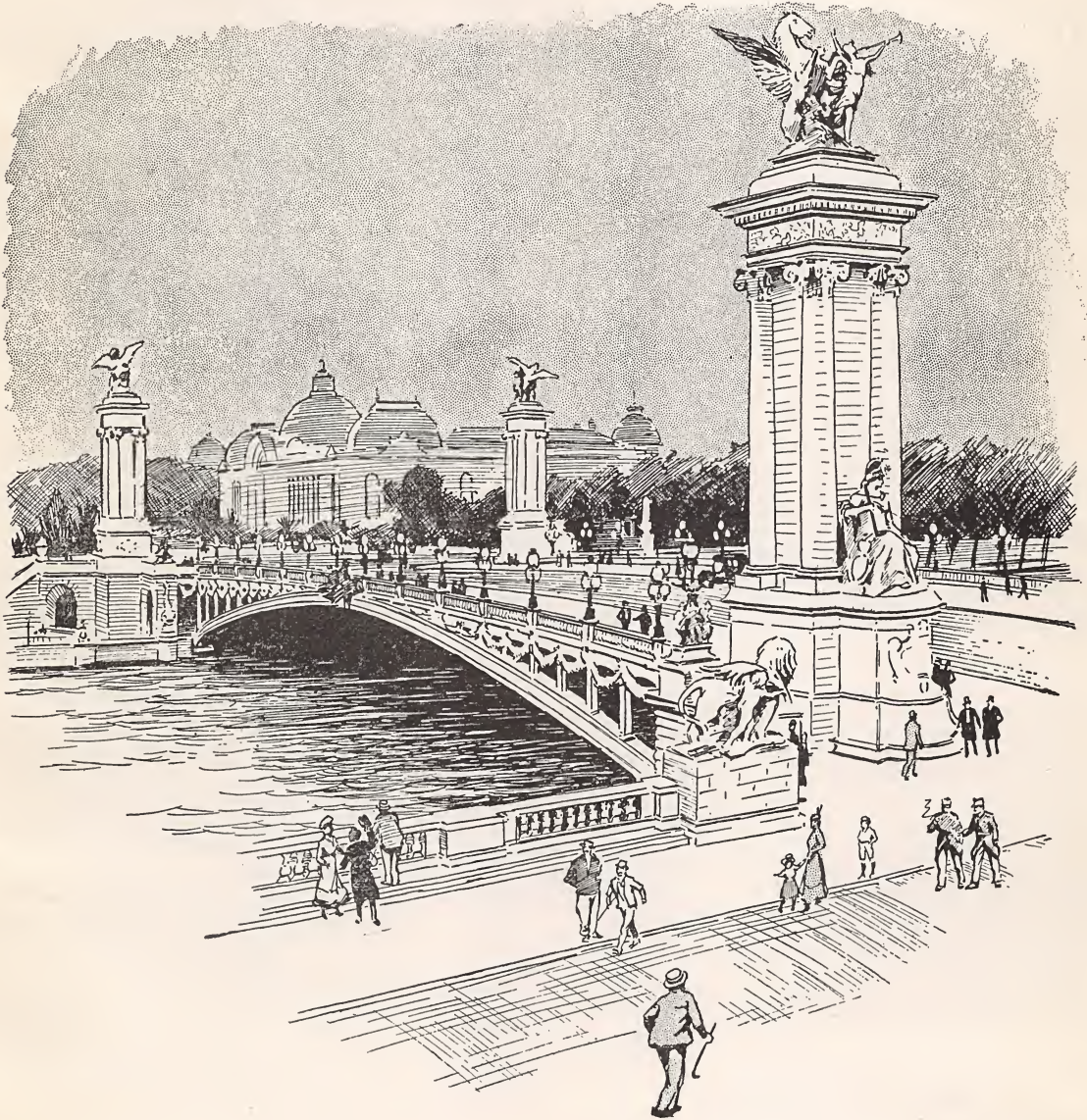
Napoleon very nearly lost his life in this brave enterprise, but his men saw their leader's danger, and with a desperate effort, they overthrew the Germans, carried the bridge, and won the battle.

Besides the bridges which connect the ancient city of Paris with the north and south banks of the Seine, there are others across the main channel of the river, and among these are the Pont de la Concorde, which is made out of the stones of the Bastille, the Pont d'Austerlitz, and the Pont d'Iéna.

These two last-named bridges commemorate two of Napoleon's great victories, and, when the Allies entered Paris after the abdication of the Emperor, it was suggested to the Czar of Russia that the name of the Pont d'Austerlitz should be altered.

'I do not mind the name,' said Alexander, 'now that I have crossed the bridge at the head of my army.'

Blücher, the Prussian general, was less generous to the vanquished French, and he wanted the Pont de Iéna, which is named after the battle when the Prussians were defeated, to be blown up with gunpowder. The Emperor of Russia, however, refused to allow this to be done, and declared that, if the bridge were destroyed, he would stand upon it and perish at the same time.



The Pont Alexandre III., Paris.

After hearing these stories it is interesting to find that the newest, and one of the most beautiful of Parisian bridges is named the Pont Alexandre, in memory of a visit paid by another Czar Alexander to the city, and in honour of the Alliance then made between the two countries of France and Russia.

There is a strange story in connection with old Paris and its bridges, about a talisman, in the shape of a piece of lead, engraved with the pictures of a flame, a water-

rat, and a snake, which, during many centuries, protected the city against fire. At last this charm was discovered in the gutter of one of the bridges, and, no sooner was it brought to light than its magic powers came to an end, and terrible fires broke out, while the city was also ravaged by plagues of rats and serpents.

The old historians tell us that the relic was quickly restored to its hiding-place, and, with its disappearance, all the trouble came to an end.

HOME-MADE FABLES.

II.—THE TYPEWRITER AND THE PEN.

'DON'T you feel your insignificance every way?' said the Typewriter to the Pen, as the machine rested after three or four hours' work. Here I have rattled off four or five columns of copy for the governor while you have been lying there idle.'

'Not quite idle,' said the Pen, pointedly. 'He had to correct by means of me several blunders you made.'

'The mistakes were no fault of mine,' rejoined the Typewriter, with such emphasis as to make the bell ring. 'I am as accurate as science can construct me.'

'And as noisy and self-assertive,' said the Pen; 'so accurate that you can't even make a note of admiration.'

'What's that?' said the Typewriter.

'Ha! ha! That is rich! The idea of you asking any one what is a note of admiration! Examine yourself, my superior friend. The fact is you are all very well in your way. I don't deny you can give me points in the matter of dry official work, but in matters of the heart or the highest flights of the mind I am always called in. I hold the secrets of the world. I am the world's vanquisher. Verily, "the pen is mightier than the sword."'

'That was said before I was known,' said the Typewriter.

'Fiddlesticks! Imagine Shakespeare, Milton, Carlyle, or Ruskin composing with a typewriter; or imagine being told that the Typewriter with which Goldsmith typed the *Vicar of Wakefield*, or Charles Dickens *David Copperfield* fetched two hundred guineas! The thing is too absurd. Your constant click would drive all real thought from an author's head. Besides, with you nobody can exactly tell where they are. You take a person's words and conceal them.'

'What are you two quarrelling about?' said the Editor, rising from his chair. 'My dear assistants, you are both of the greatest value to me; in fact, quite indispensable. The Pen deserves every respect for what it has done in the past, and for certain it is not played out yet. At the same time, if Shakespeare and many another had only made fair copy with a Typewriter, a deal of doubt would have been removed about much they are said to have written. I could wish the Typewriter were not so noisy, and the Pen not so easily spoiled. But it is useless looking for perfection in this world. Come, Pen, lend me your aid. It is now your turn. I hope you are in good condition.'

F. T. READ.

MADAME TUSSAUD.

ON April 16th of the year 1850 there died in London a lady to whom many of us owe a great deal of pleasure, Madame Tussaud, and I think it probable that some of our readers who have visited the Exhibition of Waxworks in London would like to know a little about the founder of it.

Madame Tussaud, or Marie Grosholtz, as her name was before her marriage was the daughter of a French army officer, and was born in Berne in the year 1760. She had an uncle who was a doctor in the same town, and who was very clever in modelling figures out of wax. So clever was he that he attracted the attention of a rich and influential aristocrat, the Prince de Conti,

who persuaded the doctor to give up the medical profession and to remove to Paris, and there devote his whole energy to wax-modelling. With her uncle went the little Marie, who by now had reached the age of six. From childhood she showed a remarkable talent for her uncle's art, and, under his tuition, she became so perfect in it that, as she grew up, she received commissions to model all the most famous people in France. At one time she went to stay at the magnificent royal palace at Versailles, near to Paris, there to teach King Louis XVI.'s sister to model in wax, an occupation which had become a very fashionable accomplishment for girls of that day.

In the year 1789 broke out the French Revolution, when the mass of the French people, who had been most dreadfully downtrodden and oppressed, rose up in arms against the King and the Aristocrats. At this time Marie's uncle had an exhibition of wax figures in Paris, and on July 12th the mob obtained from it a bust of the Duke of Orleans and of Necker, and carried them in jubilant procession round the streets. The Duke of Orleans was the King's brother, and he thought that by siding with the populace he could save his own life. His treacherous policy delayed, but did not prevent his death. Necker was a minister who was really anxious to better the conditions of the poor, and to remove, as far as was in his power, the wrongs under which they lived.

Terrible days and events followed the scenes of July 12th, and one after another the revolutionary Government brought those of the nobles who had not fled from the country to the guillotine, and Marie Grosholtz was called upon to make models of the heads of many of the most important of them. As time went on, the revolutionists grew suspicious, not only of the nobles, but of any one of any education, and Marie herself was suspected of being in sympathy with the Aristocrats, and was imprisoned for three months. She managed, however, to come out with a whole skin, n easy task then.

After many misfortunes, Madame Tussaud determined to leave France and to come to England, bringing her figures with her. Many of the French nobles had taken refuge here, but before Madame Tussaud settled she still had adventures to undergo. One time she was shipwrecked off the coast of Ireland, losing many of her figures. Finally, however, she opened an exhibition in the Strand, on the spot where the Lyceum Theatre now stands. She had brought to England not only her own models, but also those of her uncle, and these formed the nucleus of her Chamber of Horrors. She moved the collection to Baker Street in 1833, and it was moved to Marylebone Road in 1859. When Madame Tussaud died, her son carried on the exhibition—to be succeeded in turn by his son and grandson.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 271.)

THEY turned along a narrow lane, that was bordered on one side by the wall of the Manor grounds. This lane took a sharp turn to the right presently and led away from the wall. Here the boys dismounted, and, lifting their bicycles over a gate, they entered the meadow that here lay outside the wall.

'See that tree along there?' asked Stanley, pointing to where a gnarled and twisted oak grew close against the wall.

'Yes, what about it?' asked Raymond.

'That is our way in. We shall have to swarm up its trunk and drop down the other side. It is built into the wall itself, though you can't see that from here. Half the trunk is one side, and half the other.'

The bicycles were leant against the wall, and one after the other the three boys swarmed up the trunk of the tree, dropping easily down on the other side. The ground was covered deeply with dead leaves, whilst the young chestnut trees made the light dim with their thick foliage.

'Come on: we shall have to go softly, for there is no saying who may be about,' whispered Stanley, leading the way through the thick undergrowth, the other two following close behind him. Once they paused, thinking they heard a dog bark somewhere in front of them, but the sound was not repeated. A few minutes later Stanley paused and held up a hand in warning to the others to stop also. The reason for this was clear, for to them there came quite distinctly the noise of footsteps coming nearer and nearer.

Some one was about, and they would be discovered!

CHAPTER III.

THERE was no doubt about it, some one was coming towards the three boys standing there in the undergrowth. There was not a moment to be lost if they were to escape detection.

'Crouch down and follow me,' said Stanley in a whisper, and the others obeyed the command unquestioningly.

He led them at right angles to the direction that they had been following, in a zig-zag course away from the house and into the heart of the little wood. The brambles caught in their clothes and scratched their hands and faces, but still they went steadily forward. They could still hear the footsteps, though they were not so close to them now. At last the ground began to rise gently, and they found that they were ascending a little hill. About half-way up this Stanley paused and said: 'We had better wait a bit now. I made for this place because we can get a view from here without much danger of being seen.'

This was true. From the rising ground of this little hill they could see for a great part of the distance to the house. Quite at the summit there stood a fine silver birch that looked as though it had been there for centuries. Its stem was very thick, and its branches spread far on all sides, with their lace-like twigs bearing masses of leaves.

'I say, what a jolly tree that is,' said Raymond, admiringly. 'I don't think I have ever seen one of that kind so large.'

'No, I don't think there are many to beat it,' agreed Stanley. 'But listen! I think I can hear him coming again.'

They listened, and sure enough the footsteps were approaching once more. The boys were well hidden by the undergrowth, but all the same Stanley did not think their position too secure, and, whispering to the others to follow him, he once more glided away through the bushes with the ease and swiftness born of a long acquaintance with woods and gamekeepers. There was

a clump of holly-trees not far off, and to these the boy led them.

'There is no chance that we shall be seen here,' he said; and that was true enough. The trees were planted in the form of a circle, the branches of the holly growing so close to the ground as to form an effectual screen. Worming their way in between the stems, the three adventurers found that there was just enough room for them all inside.

'It's a bit scratchy getting in here,' said Jim, producing a travel-stained handkerchief and applying it to his wounds. 'Now I wonder—'

But the sentence was left unfinished, for at that moment the footsteps came so close that they seemed to be only a yard or so from where the boys were hidden.

The three boys held their breath and peeped through the thick curtain of holly-leaves. They had no wish to be found there, for there was no saying what the consequences of discovery might be; but on the other hand they did not dislike the adventure, and were determined to see all that they could without being themselves observed.

On and on came the feet, stepping on twigs that in the silence sounded like pistols going off when they snapped, and rustling the dead leaves with every step.

In another moment the noisy one appeared in view. He was a man of medium height, dressed in very shabby tweed clothes, and wearing a black-and-white check cap. He was dark and clean-shaven, and something in the cut of his face suggested that he might be a gentleman's servant, though his clothes hardly did so. He glanced rapidly from side to side, as he came into the little clearing in which stood the silver birch, as though he wanted to make sure that he was not observed.

From their retreat in the clump of holly the three boys had a good view of the man, and their eyes were intently fixed upon him as he stood there looking around.

I have said that the silver birch stood on a hill; but even so it was not easy to see it from the house, which lay a good quarter of a mile distant. Besides this there were many tall trees, oaks chiefly, which grew in the wood below and obscured the view.

After a moment or two spent in looking about him the man went on up the slope till he came to where the tree stood. Then, standing still, he drew something from his pocket and, unfolding it, looked at it for a little time. It seemed like a sheet of note-paper that he held in his hand, and no doubt there was something written upon it.

Presently he folded it up once more, and then, going round to the farther side of the tree, was lost to sight for a few seconds.

Then he reappeared and walked swiftly away from them down the hill, plunging through the undergrowth 'like a regiment of soldiers,' as Jim remarked.

'I think we had better wait for five minutes to let him get right out of the way,' remarked Stanley, as soon as it was safe to speak. 'Then we will continue the search.'

'I wonder what he was doing round the other side of the tree?' said Raymond.

'We will have a look before we go away,' said Jim. And then they ate the jam turnovers that they had not had time to consume on their way to the wood, but which were highly appreciated now.

(Continued on page 282.)



"The three boys held their breath."



"With his knife he lifted the edge of the bark."

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By Edna Lake.

(Continued from page 279.)

'TIME'S up,' said Stanley, when they had waited for the stipulated five minutes.

They crept out of their rather prickly hiding-place and made their way up to the top of the hill, keeping under cover as long as it was possible to do so. All at once Raymond, who was in front, stopped and said quickly: 'Listen! I'm sure I heard something.'

They listened intently, but heard nothing.

'What did you mean by "something?"' asked Jim. 'Did you mean footsteps or—'

'I thought I heard a dog barking,' said Raymond, as they went on again.

They had only gone a few paces when the sound came again, and this time all three heard it plainly.

'It is a dog barking, and it sounds like Jinks,' said Stanley; 'only where on earth does it come from?'

They stood still and waited for the sound to be repeated, but they heard nothing more.

'I could not make out from which direction it came, could you?' asked Stanley, as they started on their way once more.

'No,' answered Raymond, 'that's just it. I couldn't say at all where the barking came from, but I heard it plainly enough, and the other time as well. There must be a dog somewhere about here, only rather far off, I should think, from the sound of it. Let's hurry up and look at this tree, and then we will go lower down and search. We shall have to make haste, for it is getting rather late. It is after five already.'

They quickened their steps then, and were soon on the other side of the silver birch where they had seen the man stand for a moment. Lower down the trunk was roughened by the many storms that had beat upon it, but the higher branches were smooth and gleamed from the dark foliage like streaks of silver.

'There is nothing here,' said Stanley, after they had searched the trunk with their eyes for a moment or two in silence.

'No—but there must be,' said Jim, confidently. 'I mean,' he added, 'we cannot see anything because we don't know what to look for, or where to look; but all the same I am certain that that fellow came here for some purpose, and also that he did not want any one to see him.'

'And it had something to do with that paper that he took out of his pocket,' said Raymond. 'I feel sure of that.'

'I don't think that we ought to waste any more time in looking here when Jinks is not found,' said Stanley, who liked to do one thing at a time, and had set his mind on finding the lost dog. 'Don't you think it would be a good plan if we all separated and went in different directions?'

'Of course. You settle who shall go where,' said Raymond, at once.

'Very well,' agreed Stanley, and he mapped each out a portion of the wood to explore, so that when they met again at the tree in the wall by which they had entered the grounds they might have covered all the locality.

'And we must arrange a time for meeting. It won't do to be late for breakfast,' said Jim, before they parted.

'No, we must be home by eight,' said Stanley. 'We will all be at the meeting-place at half-past seven. How will that do?'

The other two agreed that it would do very well, and then they set out each in a different direction.

Jim, who was as clever as his brother at getting about a wood with the maximum of speed and the minimum of noise, had soon finished the portion allotted to him, but without result. He arrived first at the meeting-place, and, finding there was still a quarter of an hour to spare, he put into execution a project that had been in his mind all the time. He went swiftly back to where the silver birch stood, and began a minute inspection of the trunk of the tree on the side where the strange man had stood. Up and up he went, steadily higher and higher. At last his patience was rewarded. 'Now I've got it,' he exclaimed in delight, as he saw a cut in the bark of the tree. With his knife he lifted the edge of the bark and raised a piece that was in the shape of a right-angled triangle. Inserted between the bark and the trunk of the tree was a small piece of paper. Jim took this out and hurried away with it to the spot where the others would by this time be awaiting him.

They had had no more luck in their search than he had, and were inclined to be despondent at the failure of their efforts to find Jinks; but when they saw the scrap of paper that Jim had found their despondency gave place to curiosity, and sitting down on the ground close against the wall they peered over his shoulder when he unfolded the paper.

It was thin paper, and easily folded into a small compass; but when it was spread out it proved to be much larger than any one had expected.

'Well, this is queer! What on earth does it mean?' exclaimed Jim, as he finished unfolding the paper; and the exclamation was echoed by Stanley and Raymond.

There on the paper, written in violet ink, were a number of figures divided by colons and full-stops; but there was not one word written there.

'This is some cypher or other,' said Stanley, at once; 'the question for us to answer is, "What do the figures mean?"'

CHAPTER IV.

For a little while the three boys sat there under the shadow of the wall, trying to puzzle out the meaning of that array of figures. But they had not the key to the secret and could make nothing of it.

'I'll keep it, I think,' said Jim, preparing to fold the paper and put it once more into his pocket.

'No, you had better not. We don't know what it means, but that does not make it right for us to keep it. It may be very important: and to say the least of it it would be rather risky work to run off with it,' said Stanley, who, although he was every bit as fond of adventure as his brother, was also better able to look forward to the consequences of his actions.

'Well, but then we shall be no better off than we are now,' grumbled Jim.

'Look here,' said Raymond, who had during the conversation been searching in his pockets. 'I have

a piece of pencil, and if either of you have any paper on you, we will just copy this down before returning it, and then we can have another shot at its meaning when we get home.'

Stanley had a note-book in his pocket, and, tearing a page out of this, they hastily made a copy of the message. As soon as this was done, Jim ran back once more to the spot where the silver birch stood and replaced the paper.

'Now we shall have to make haste,' said Stanley, as he rejoined the other two. 'Quick and shin over the wall.'

They climbed up that convenient tree and were in another moment hastening through the meadow towards the lane, where the bicycles were. They rode quickly, and were home in good time for breakfast at eight o'clock.

In the dining-room they found Norah and Joan, who had been up for some time and had been searching in the garden and the outhouses for the lost Jinks.

(Continued on page 290.)

HOW TO MAKE A BUZZER.

ALL you need to make a 'buzzer' is a piece of strong sewing thread and a large button from an overcoat. The button must have at least two holes. It will probably have four, arranged at the corners of a little square. In this case you use two opposite holes—not two that are side by side—and thread the cotton through them. Pass one end of the cotton through from the back, and then through the other hole from the front. Afterwards tie the ends of the thread together, and slide the button along until it is in the middle. By giving a slight twist to the button and then alternately stretching the thread between both hands and letting it go loose again the button will be made to spin round like a wheel, but so quickly that you cannot see it move. At the same time a buzzing sound will be heard, something like a wasp's buzz.

DEAN SWIFT.

A LADY invited Dean Swift to a most sumptuous dinner. She said: 'Dear Dean, this fish is not as good as I could wish, though I sent for it half across the kingdom, and it cost me so much,' naming an incredible price. 'And this thing is not such as I ought to have for such a guest, though it came from such a place and cost such a sum.' Thus she went on, decrying and underrating every article of her expensive and ostentatious dinner, and teasing her guest with her apologies, only to find a chance to display her vanity, in bringing her trouble and expense into view, until she exhausted his patience. He is reported to have risen in a passion, and to have said: 'True, madam, it is a miserable dinner; and I will not eat it, but go home and dine upon sixpence worth of herring.'

THE VARNISH TREE.

THE tree that produces 'Ningpo varnish' is one of the most remarkable trees of the East. It is cultivated in many parts of China and Japan, and, in general, is the basis of lacquering in those

countries. In many respects it resembles an ash. It grows from fifteen to eighteen feet high, and after seven years it can be tapped. The varnish is obtained by making incisions in the bark near the base of the tree, then catching the sap which it exudes. This work must be done before the sun is up, during the months of July and August.

The sap having been placed in tubs or similar vessels, these are set in the sun. A clear, resinous liquid then rises to the top, while a thicker, darker, more resinous liquid mass settles at the bottom. The top represents the fine grades, and the bottom the lower grades used for ordinary paints.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

9.—CHARADE.

Something pungent, sure to please
Epicures, who sit at ease.

Something fragrant, cool and green,
Welcome in the summer scene.

Sometimes white, and sometimes black,
Used in suffering's attack;
Purchased both by youth and age,
Tender child, or matron sage,
Church, or school, or doctor's shop,
May contain it, so we'll stop. C. J. B.

(Answer on page 323.)

ANSWERS TO TRANSPOSITIONS ON PAGE 251.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Shoe—hose. | 5. Meat—tame. |
| 2. Seal—sale. | 6. Galen—angel. |
| 3. Robe—Bore. | 7. Chum—much. |
| 4. Teal—tale. | |

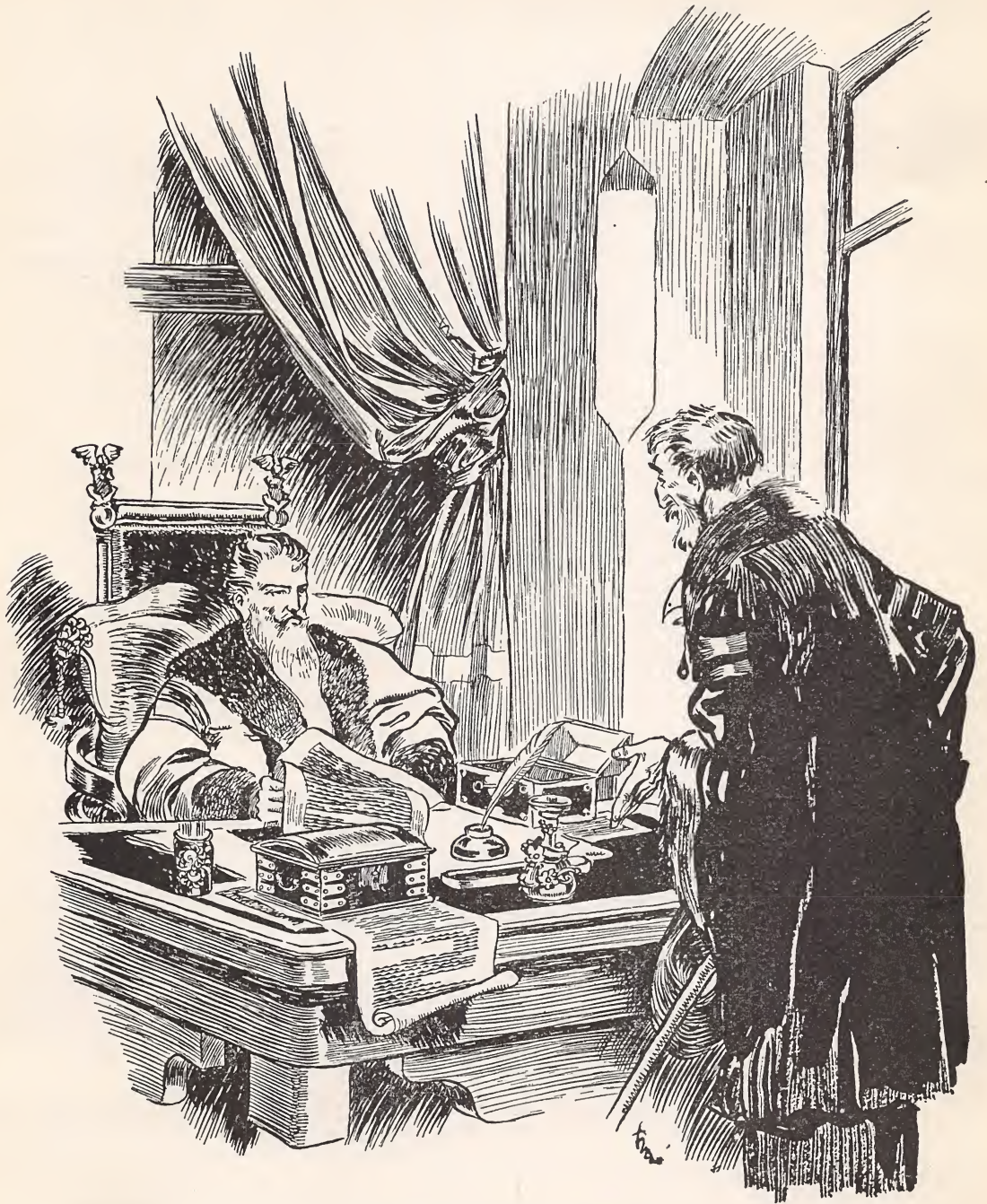
THE TELL-TALE MARK.

A MAN named Christopher Rosenkranz, of Copenhagen, demanded from a widow payment of a debt of 5000 dollars. Certain that she did not owe him anything, the woman said that the bond he produced, signed by her and her late husband, must be a forgery. The matter was carried into court, and judgment given against the widow, who was ordered to pay the sum demanded. In her distress, she appealed to King Christian IV. He promised to give the case his careful consideration. Sending for Rosenkranz, the King questioned him closely, then begged and exhorted him to show mercy to the poor widow. The man persisted in his claim.

'I have the written bond,' he said.

'Let me see it,' said the King.

Rosenkranz fetched it, and the King, after promising to return the document soon, sent him away. Left alone, King Christian carefully examined the bond, and, after much trouble, found out that the paper-maker whose mark it bore had not started his manufactory until some years after the date given. This fact, of course, proved the bond to be a forgery. The kind King said nothing about his discovery until he had given the sinner another chance to repent. Again he sent for and pleaded with



“‘Let me see it,’ said the King.”

Rosenkranz. Finding entreaties useless, he told the man that unless he would forego his claim the justice of heaven would assuredly punish him for his wickedness. Rosenkranz not only still persisted,

but also appeared angry and offended. Even then, the King allowed him a few days in which to come to a better mind. As, however, he failed to do so, he was arrested, convicted, and punished.

THE FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

IX.—THE WATTLE OF AUSTRALIA.

I THINK it quite likely that you will say, 'What in the world is Wattle?' Well, it is the Australian name for Mimosa, which is the Commonwealth's national flower. You will at once conclude that you now know all about it, because, you would argue, you are familiar with the Mimosa that is sold in our English streets in great profusion in the spring. But it happens that the matter is not nearly so easily settled as that, for the Mimosa sold as such is not a true Mimosa, but a variety of Acacia,



1. A SPRIG OF MIMOSA OR SILVER WATTLE

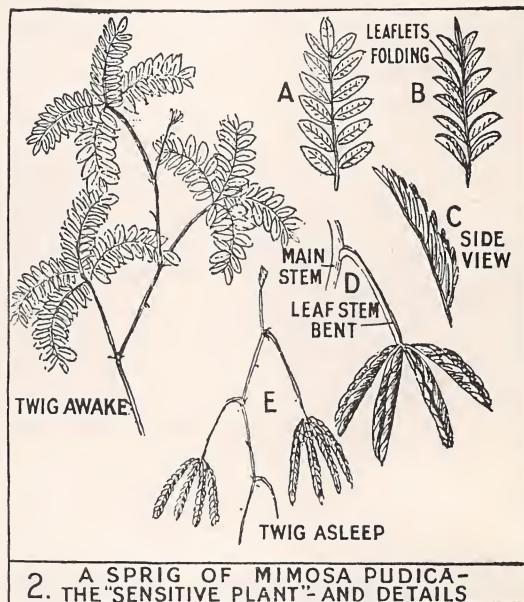
called the Silver Wattle (fig. 1). Popular names are nearly always very misleading, and in this case particularly so, for what most people call Mimosa is a true Acacia, and what most people call Acacia is a false Acacia named Robinia Pseudacacia; now there is a complication for you! I just put it in to show you how easily one can get mixed up over a thing like this.

Well, I heard somehow, I forget now how, that Wattle, otherwise Mimosa, is the national flower of Australia; but it has taken me endless inquiries, letters, and interviews to get any further. There are a number of varieties grown in Australia and other places, but, as far as I can ascertain, the most common, and I think the Wattle is Mimosa Pudica. Now, before I go further, I must tell you that this plant, and most other varieties, sleep. There is a variety, Mimosa Sensitiva, the 'Sensitive Plant,' which folds its leaves at a touch; but Pudica is not quite so sensitive as that. Fig. 2 shows you a small twig of this Mimosa Pudica 'awake,' with its leaves outspread; and at A, B, C, D, and E I give you a series of sketches of parts of a leaf going to sleep, and a bit of twig asleep. You see the tiny leaflets fold together, then each one falls against the next; then the four sprays of leaflets shut together like

the closing together of the fingers of a hand. Lastly, the whole compound leaf is lowered by its leaf-stalk, it bending back just where it joins the stem. Of course, in England we have several plants that are sensitive, notably, Oxalis.

Now to move on with my account of the Wattle. Some one in my presence, not long ago, spoke of 'Wattle Day.' I find, however, that there is a good deal of confusion as to when 'Wattle Day' is, but I finally came to the conclusion that 'Wattle Day' in Australia is September 1st, which corresponds to our old English May Day, for on September 1st Australians greet the arrival of their spring, just as we on May 1st used to greet our spring. In England, January 26th is called 'Wattle Day' by all good Australians, and they wear sprigs of the Mimosa we see sold in our streets at that time; but of course it is not a spring festival, but seems to be the anniversary of the date on which Admiral Phillip, in 1788, landed in New South Wales with the first batch of British settlers. It had been visited in 1769 by Captain Cook, who landed and claimed the country for Great Britain, naming that particular part 'New South Wales.' It is really not known exactly who discovered Australia, for several explorers seem to have bumped up against different parts at different times, and they never agreed as to who did first touch land there. However, I think the above facts are now accepted as matters of history.

September in Australia is the month for the Wattle



2. A SPRIG OF MIMOSA PUDICA—THE "SENSITIVE PLANT"—AND DETAILS

to be in full bloom, and a truly wonderful sight it is. Our hawthorn in spring is a pretty sight, covering our hedges as though with snow; but the Wattle is much more common than hawthorn, for whole tracts of land are simply covered with its bushes, growing as high as nine or ten feet, and when in bloom presenting a glory of pure gold such as English people can only dimly picture.

A writer, in speaking of the Wattle when not in bloom, described it as a 'grey, quiet bush'—this refers to its very grey-green dainty foliage. The contrast it presents when its great masses of golden blooms droop nearly to the ground is startling. It is everywhere, even on the plains on ground which is considered barren. I met a friend the other day who had been some years in Australia, and asked him at once to tell me something about the Wattle. Without a second's hesitation he said, 'Why, the Wattle is nothing more nor less than a perfect pest!' And then he told me some very interesting things about it. It seems that the seed-vessels of all varieties are exceedingly hard, so hard that if you just planted them in an ordinary garden you might wait for many years—nothing would happen, and the seeds would be as sound as ever, for they are too hard to germinate or sprout under ordinary circumstances. What you have to do to grow them from seeds in our land is to put them in a pan of water and put the pan in the oven till the water boils! Then the seed-case will crack, and after this treatment the seeds may germinate.

This information puzzled me much, as I had just been told it grew in such profusion everywhere in Australia, and I wondered how it spread if not by seeds. Then my friend told me that when colonists get possession of a piece of virgin land it is covered with trees and bushes of various kinds, but not Wattle—there may not be a Wattle for miles! The first thing the settler does is to cut down the trees and bushes and make great fires to burn them all up. Now in the earth near the surface there seems always to be millions of Wattle seeds. The heat from the fires cracks the seed-cases, and within a short time after the ground is cleared the Wattle comes up and takes possession of it, being a formidable pest which is treated as such, though never exterminated.

It has got one use besides being extremely beautiful to look upon and having a very sweet scent: the bark in spring is stripped off, and after being chopped up into small pieces is sent to the tanners, where they extract from it tannin, with which they tan the leather for boots. Of course the same thing is done with our oak bark.

The Wattle was adopted by public proclamation five years ago as the floral emblem of the Commonwealth, and is now incorporated into their coat-of-arms.

E. M. Barlow.

BIRDS' NESTS.

THE sparrow makes her nest of hay,
All warmly lined with feather;
The magpie makes her nest of sticks
To stand all kinds of weather.

The skylark builds among the grass,
Or in the waving corn;
The tiny, cheerful Jenny Wren
Builds in an ivied thorn.

The robin finds a shady bank
With moss all soft and green;
The blackbird's nest of mud and grass
In bush or bank is seen.

The thrush will choose a sheltered bush,
The owl a hollow tree;
Rooks build together in the elms,
Their nests you often see.

The cuckoo makes no nest at all,
A lazy bird is he;
She lays her eggs in other's nests.
The dove builds in a tree.

Some children seek these pretty homes
Of birds who sing so sweetly,
They take the eggs and tear the nests
Which have been built so neatly.

But we will never do such things,
We better know, you see.
We love the birds who sing to us,
And fill our hearts with glee.
A. Stanley Wrench.

ONLY A DOG!

A PLEASANT story has been told concerning Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, the author of *Rab and His Friends*, one of the most beautiful stories of the faithful devotion of a dog that has ever been written.

On one occasion, a gentleman who was staying at his house was observed to be looking out of the window, apparently interested in something that was going on in the street.

Dr. John Brown said to his friend: 'What are you looking at?'

His friend replied: 'Oh, it's only a dog!'

The kind-hearted Doctor took up his friend's words and repeated them, but there was a world of meaning in his voice as he said, 'Only a dog!'

To him a dog meant so much—a type of all that was lovable and devoted in the animal world—and it cut him to the quick that any one could speak, even of a dog, in tones of indifference, if not of contempt.

Frank Ellis.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By William Rainey.

(Continued from page 275.)

AFTER the glaring sunlight outside, the interior of the hut had appeared absolutely dark to the boys, but now that their eyes were becoming accustomed to it, they saw that the hut was littered with blankets and bundles. Dick was in the act of pulling some of the former toward him to make a seat more favourable to his spear-pricks, when he noticed a movement in the bundles at the far corner, and he then saw that they were not the only prisoners. The bundles moved again, and he made out a huddled figure squatting in the corner with knees up and drooped head resting on them. He nudged Harry to draw his attention. A turbaned head was slowly raised and a face was turned toward them—the worn, patient face of an aged man.

'The Man of Mystery,' exclaimed Dick in amazement.

The eyes looked quietly on them, and a faint smile of recognition spread over the features, but there was no astonishment. He looked as if he had lived so long in the world, and had been revolved so continuously on the wheel of fortune that nothing

could surprise him or disturb his placid resignation; yet they had seen him dart, his ankles twinkling, with the speed of a deer.

'Well, old man,' said Dick, 'you seem to be in the same fix as we are. I thought you were a sort of Dervish yourself. Funny, isn't it?' he continued, turning to Harry. 'He's dressed like a Dervish, but he's evidently a prisoner like ourselves. I suppose he's done something, and they were after him when we found him in the temple, and that's what made him so jolly frightened when he heard Selim coming up behind, and perhaps that's how they came across our tracks. They say two's company and three's none; but it will make it a bit livelier, won't it, having old Mystery with us?'

'I don't see where the liveliness comes in,' replied Harry.

'Don't get the blues, Harry,' said Dick, and, turning, addressed his remarks to the old Arab.

'How are you, old gentleman? You've had bad luck like ourselves. You got that basket of food we left for you in the temple, and that reminds me, are these beauties going to give us any water?'

The Arab nodded his head, repeating the word—water—after Dick, and putting down his hand beside him very carefully drew up a basin made from a gourd which was nearly half full of the precious liquid, and offering it to Dick said, 'Drink.' He then sat back, and closing his eyes kept muttering words and broken sentences that seemed to Dick to be English.

Dick took a sip and passed the basin to Harry. 'Don't drink much of it. I expect it's his allowance for the day,' he said. They could each have drained that shallow bowl and looked for more; they took but a sip, however, and passed it back again. But the Arab would not have it. 'Up,' he said, motioning with his hand. 'Drink—drink,' and in a low voice, 'Drink ye all of it.' He leaned back again, his eyes closed, and a puzzled expression on his countenance, and his lips moving as if he were trying to find words with which to express his full meaning, or seeking to unravel some intricate problem.

Dick now turned his attention to what was going on outside the shelter. It was not much that came within the field of his observation, as the opening of the hut was not large, and at times the big Dervish, who stood on guard without, almost blocked the entrance with his broad back and baggy trousers; but he gathered that fresh arrivals were putting in an appearance, and new shelters and tents were being put up. The circle of huts of which their prison was one, was the second. Apparently other circles were being formed behind which would hem them in at the back. The most open place, if there ever came a chance of escape, thought Dick, was in front, where only two tents would have to be passed. Then the land sloped towards the well from which he had seen the water carried, and which no doubt led to the dry watercourse at the bottom of the ravine, and along this there was good cover. That would be the best course if they had an opportunity to escape, although he had seen the flash of spear-points among the rocks at the mouth of the ravine, and did not doubt that sentries were posted there.

'I should say there are about a couple of hundred men in the camp,' he said to Harry; 'but others are arriving, and a lot of camels with baggage. I should fancy it is a raiding expedition, or else the advance

party of some bigger movement thrown out across the desert and keeping wide of Wady Halfa, as Uncle Charlie said, and means swooping down on the Nile Valley. Don't you remember what Uncle said—that they might have done it at first, and swept Egypt clean of every European, but they left it till too late? Perhaps they're going to try the dodge now. I wish that big fellow outside would take his bandy legs away. I had a nice peep-hole just now.'

'What I'm thinking of is—Uncle Charlie. What's become of him?' Harry blurted out, with a strong disposition to burst into unmanly tears.

Dick dropped his head, and, at the same time, his confident manner, and said in a low voice: 'Yes, that's what has been bothering me, only I didn't like to say anything about it.'

'What has become of him?' repeated Harry. 'He must have seen the Dervishes, and made a bolt of it before we came down from the tower. I don't think they could have captured him, or we should have seen something of him here. I wonder if he made a dash for the hiding-place in the rock temple? You may be sure the Dervishes will make a good search for him. Even if they saw nothing of him, they'd know very well that we two boys are not in the desert by ourselves, and they'll search every corner for the rest of the party.'

'If he is in the chamber under the big statue, he'll be all right,' said Dick. 'A good job we provisioned it. He knows how it works, and can get in and out, and when the coast is clear he'll pick up our tracks and come to look for us.'

'Yes, and a nice state he'll be in when he finds we've disappeared—carried off by the Dervishes—and poor old Selim, too,' and Harry gave an upward melancholy look. 'Uncle Charlie won't stop in the place under the statue. He'll be hanging round the temple looking for us, or trying to find some way of rescuing us, and what can one man do against a couple of hundred Dervishes? They'll lay wait for him; they'll be on the look-out, and Uncle won't go away and save himself, you may be sure of that.'

After a painful pause, Dick said: 'I'll tell you what Uncle will do; he'll do just what we should do if we were in his place and he in ours.'

'What's that?' said Harry.

'As you say,' replied Dick, 'one man is no match for a couple of hundred, especially such savage beggars as these Dervishes. He'll soon find out that we've been carried off by them. If he didn't see it, Selim must have done so, from the top of the tower, as they dragged us along under the cliff. Well, this is what Uncle Charlie will do. He won't lose any time. He'll get the felucca afloat at Crocodile Creek—he'll have Selim to help him with the boat—and he'll go down the creek and out into the river; then back the way we came, down the Nile to Mahatta; leave the boat there to avoid the Cataract, and cut across country to Assuan where the soldiers are. The current will be with him to Mahatta; he could pretty well do it in a day, I should think. Then he'll put the matter in the hands of the officer in command, and in three days, or four at the outside, we shall have the military here. Uncle will not only be saving us, but doing good service to the military by his information, which will enable them to put a stopper on the raid and strike a blow at the Dervishes.'

(Continued on page 295.)



“‘Up,’ he said, motioning with his hand. ‘Drink—drink!’”



“‘How queer!’ exclaimed Norah, as they bent over the paper.”

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 283.)

'WHERE have you all been to?' asked Joan, as the three boys entered the room. 'We looked for you, but you had gone out, Mary said, before she came down. Have you seen anything of Jinks?'

'No, nothing at all,' said Stanley. 'But perhaps he will turn up soon. It does not seem to be of any use to look for him.'

'Poor dear old Jinks,' sighed Joan. 'I wonder if Father would offer a reward for him. Perhaps some one has stolen him.'

'I don't think that is likely, my dear; but if it will ease your mind I will offer ten shillings to any one who can produce him,' said the Doctor, who had at that moment entered the room and had heard what Joan was saying.

'That ought to bring him,' said Jim; 'that is, of course, if any one has stolen him; but for my part I am more inclined to think that he has gone off into the woods on his own.'

'Yes. I think that is the more likely reason for his disappearance,' said Dr. Railton. 'You might have a look in the woods this morning. By-the-by, Jim, whom have you been fighting? I see the marks of battle plain upon your face and hands.'

Jim got rather red. They had not meant to say anything about their visit to the grounds of the Manor, unless they had been successful in their search. But now he must explain, for Dr. Railton always expected, and therefore always received, direct answers to his questions. 'We have been out looking for Jinks, in the grounds of the Manor, Father,' he said.

'In the grounds of the Manor! What made you think of going there?' There was not a little surprise in the Doctor's tone, as he put the question.

'Well, you see, Father, there are any number of rabbits there,' said Stanley, 'and then there is that notice, you know. We thought we had better not leave anything to chance, or we might never see Jinks again.'

'Ah, yes, I remember,' said the Doctor quickly. 'It is a pity that Mr. Haverford lives there like that.'

There was a moment's silence, and the Doctor appeared to be thinking of something. Then he spoke once more.

'You saw nothing of him?'

'Not a trace,' answered Jim. 'But we thought we heard him bark twice.'

'Oh, Jim, did you really? Are you sure?' cried Joan in excitement, looking as, though she would like to rush off to the Manor grounds at once and see for herself whether Jinks was there.

'We heard a dog barking, certainly,' put in Raymond, 'only we are not sure that it was Jinks. And we could not find out where the sound came from.'

'It was inside the grounds?' questioned Dr. Railton.

'Yes. I don't think there is any doubt at all of that,' said Stanley.

'Well, sound is deceptive, and it might have been a dog away here in the village,' said his father. 'If I were you I would look in the woods, but not in the grounds of the Manor again. I do not know Mr. Haverford, and he is scarcely the kind of man that one could approach. He sees no one; and you stand a good

chance of being had up for trespassing if you go there, and that would not be very pleasant, would it?'

'I think we can give any of them the slip,' said Jim with assurance, as he thought of the noise the man whom they had seen that morning had made.

Aunt Eliza did not usually appear at breakfast-time, and as soon as the meal was over the children all set off to the woods that lay on the opposite side of the road to Dene Manor.

'We will make a thorough search of the woods here, and then we will go and do those on the other side of the station,' said Stanley, as they rode up the hill. 'Of course those other woods are a good way off, but there's no telling where Jinks may have had a fancy to go.'

When they reached the wood, they hid their bicycles in the undergrowth, at a spot where they would be quite safe, and yet easy to find when they were wanted again.

'I say, we never told the girls of that man,' said Jim suddenly as they stood for a moment or two deciding in which direction they would go first.

'No, neither did we. I had quite forgotten,' said Stanley, whilst Norah and Joan asked, 'What man do you mean?' both together.

'It was in the Manor grounds,' said Jim. 'I say, what's the reason we should not sit down here for a bit, and have another look at that paper?' he went on, addressing the other two boys.

The suggestion was declared to be a good one, and they told the girls all that had taken place that morning when they were trespassing.

'How queer!' exclaimed Norah, as they bent over the paper, trying to discover the meaning of the figures written there. 'There must be a key to it. I wish we knew what it is.'

'Yes, so do I; but I am going to have a try to read it to-night,' said Jim. 'There is not time now; but I will find it out, before I'm much older.'

After a little more discussion they put the paper away, and started to search the wood in the hope that if Jinks had been caught in a trap they would find him there, despite the barking that the boys had heard in the grounds of the Manor that very morning.

Their search was a thorough one, but all the same it met with no success. When it was time to return to the Grange for dinner they had to admit total defeat. They had neither seen nor heard anything of the lost dog.

'It is dreadful. I am sure he has either been stolen, or else he is really in the Manor grounds, somewhere,' said Joan, as they went home. 'I wish we could go there and look.'

'We looked everywhere this morning, and if he had been there I think we must have seen him,' said Stanley. 'It may have been, as Father said, that the barking we heard came from the direction of the village.'

'Well it may be so, but it sounded a lot too close for that,' said Raymond, as they entered the drive to the Grange. 'I vote we have another look there later on,' he added to Stanley, who was walking beside him; 'but it will be best not to say anything about it, for it's not a place where the girls could go.'

'Well, my dears, what success have you had?' asked Aunt Eliza when they met at the dinner-table.

'None at all, Auntie,' said Joan in a dispirited manner. 'I am afraid something dreadful has happened to poor old Jinks this time, or he would have turned up before now.'

'Don't worry, dearie. He will come home I am sure just when you are not thinking about him. It is the unexpected that always happens, you know,' said Aunt Eliza, and then she purposely led the talk into other channels, for she saw that Joan was really distressed at her pet's disappearance, and needed cheering up.

'I have to go to Chudley this afternoon to see Mrs. Arnold,' she said brightly, 'and I should like to take you and Norah with me. You have never seen the new baby, Joan, and she is a little love. The Doctor will take us in the car, as he is going there too.'

'Oh, that will be lovely!' said Joan, her face lighting up at the prospect. 'Mrs. Arnold is a dear, and so are the little boys.'

'Yes. I am afraid we cannot take any of you,' went on Aunt Eliza, looking at the boys; 'but I do not think it would be quite in your line, would it?'

'Not at all, Auntie,' put in Jim hastily. He was not interested in babies, new or otherwise, and he was not sorry that they were to be left to their own devices that afternoon.

'We may not be home very soon, but your tea will be ready for you at half-past four,' said Aunt Eliza, when, the meal over, they went out into the hall.

'And you will go on looking for Jinks, won't you?' asked Joan pleadingly. She was wondering if she ought to go out and enjoy herself when the dog was not found.

'We'll look for him, never fear,' said Stanley, and they rode off down the drive, this time going in the direction of the railway, for they intended to search the woods that lay beyond it.

They spent a busy afternoon, and a tiring one too. They arrived home for tea without having had a glimpse of Jinks to reward them for their trouble.

'I say, what do you think: shall we go and look in the Manor grounds again?' said Jim, with his mouth full of cake.

'No, I don't think it would be a good time. Better wait till the morning and go as we did to-day,' said Stanley, and Raymond agreed with him.

'But how would it be to go to that wood where we went with the girls, and take another look round?' he suggested, and Stanley and Jim agreed that this might be a good plan, 'in case we missed anything this morning,' said Jim. 'We thought we covered all the ground, but it is easy to have overlooked some of it.'

Accordingly, as soon as they had finished their tea, they rode off once more to the wood on the hill opposite the Manor. They did not give up the search until dusk had fallen and made it impossible for them to see anything.

They rode home then, feeling that they had done a good day's work, though it had yielded nothing in the shape of results.

At the bottom of the hill, where the lane along which they had ridden that morning branched off, Raymond glanced up at the rising ground, where they could see the silver birch outlined distantly against the evening sky.

'I say, look there,' he said, putting on his brakes, and dismounting. The other two also dismounted and looked towards where he was pointing.

There, close to the tree where they had found that message concealed in the bark, there was a light moving to and fro. Some one was there, evidently, and looking for something.

(Continued on page 302.)

IN GRUMBLE LANE.

IN Grumble Lane the banks are high
And slippery and steep,
The thick-set hedges hide the sky,
The ditches are so deep.

No violets, born of April showers,
Are found in Grumble Lane;
You could not pick sufficient flowers
To make a daisy-chain.

And while the birds of Sunshine Town
Are singing all the day,
In Grumble Lane, where children frown,
They hide themselves away.

So say good-bye to Giant Fret,
King Sulks, and Queen Complain;
And try your hardest to forget
The way to Grumble Lane.

EDITH E. MILLARD.

THE STEAM TRAWLER.

EVERY reader of *Chatterbox* knows how brave and skilful are the men who spend most of their lives at sea catching fish for quiet folk on land; and every one has heard, too, of the wonderful courage and splendid seamanship of these same seafaring men when they play their part in the British Navy in the Great War. Here is a description of the kind of boat they use.

Steamboats for sea fishing were first built by the French in 1865, and, despite the opposition, at first, of the fishermen who were used to sailing vessels, steam has won its way over sails, mainly because the steam trawlers were adopted by Great Britain, the chief seafaring nation. They can steam to more distant fishing grounds, and, owing to the advantage of steam over wind, the principle which they employ of forcing the fish into the net is rendered much more effective.

The first English ones were built in the usual form of tug-boat, adapted for trawling; and with these successful experiments were made. After many years' experience, a particular type of vessel was evolved, to which form nearly all trawlers now approach.

Fig. 1 shows a trawler such as is common to the North Sea, a vessel with a length of ninety or one hundred feet. Larger vessels, having a greater distance to travel, such as the cod-fishers of the banks of Newfoundland, have a length of up to one hundred and seventy feet. These last are provided often with a refrigerating and ice-making plant for cold storage, so as to preserve the fish on the long journey from the fishing-ground to port.

The machinery, boiler, coal-bunkers, and engineers' and officers' quarters, are placed in the after-part of the ship, and forward of them is provided the hold for the fish and accommodation for the crew. The fish-hold is divided by a number of partitions, each division having many shelves fitted, any one of which will fit in the place of any other. They can be arranged with varying spaces between them, according to the number and nature of fish carried. The deck above is divided by wooden divisions, about two feet deep, into what are called 'deck pounds'; in these the fish are sorted before being transferred to the shelves in the hold.

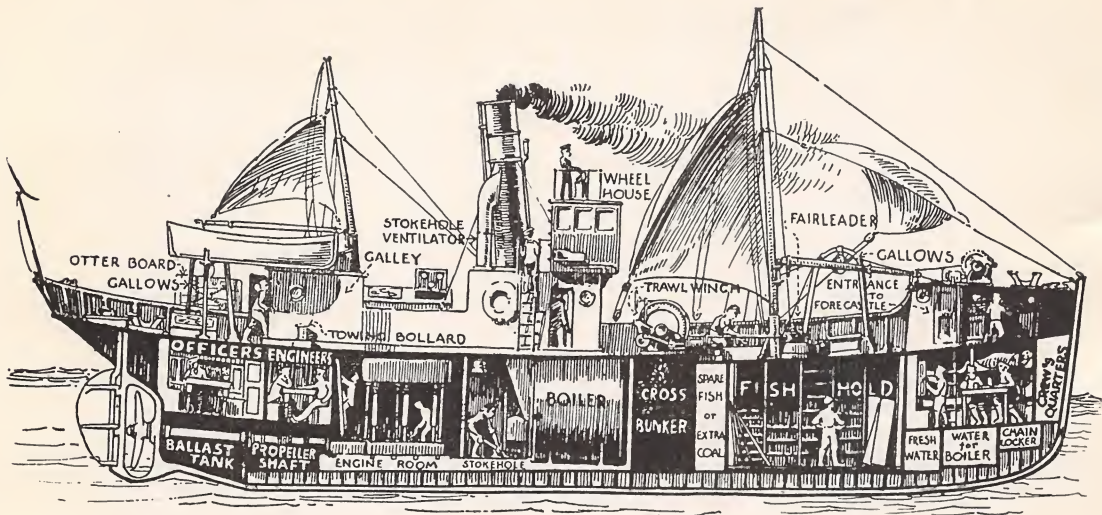


Fig. 1.—A typical North Sea Steam Trawler, showing its inside arrangements.

The operation of trawling is begun with the wind on the beam, the net being lowered on the lee side, or the one away from the wind. The net is attached to what are called 'otter boards' (fig. 2); there are two of these, and the forward one is lowered first. They are hung from the 'gallows' (fig. 3) of which there are four, two forward and two aft, so that trawling may be

heavily shod with iron, about nine feet long, and weighing a matter of eight hundredweight.

The nets used (fig. 4) are very large, the otter trawl net being the type commonly employed. The size of them may be judged from the drawings (figs. 4 and 5), the larger net shown being of about the right proportion for the trawler depicted in fig. 1. It is made of manilla twine, the mesh being at the end about one and a half inches from knot to knot, and three inches towards the mouth. It is about eighty feet long and sixty wide.

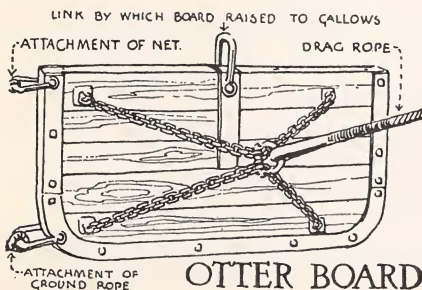


Fig. 2.

carried out on either side of the vessel. The gallows is shaped like a bow, is firmly attached to the deck, and leans outward (away from the ship) so that the hanging otter board clears the ship's side. To this last the drag ropes, one for each board, are attached: these are nearly three inches in thickness, made of steel wire, and have a length of about one thousand fathoms, or more than a mile.

After lowering the boards, the forward one is run out until it has dropped back to the level of the other, when both continue together. The attachment of the drag-rope to the board is so arranged that when pulled over the floor of the sea, the two boards slide outwards, separating from each other and so keeping the mouth of the net wide. They are large wooden structures,

GALLOWS

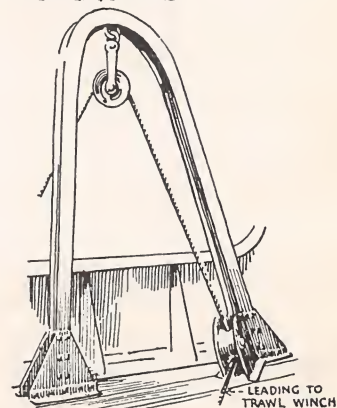


Fig. 3.

The open end is widely cut into a U shape, and the under side much more deeply still. The under side is weighted with a heavy rope, causing it to drag on the ground. This is the 'ground rope,' which has a circumference of eight inches. The net tapers quickly from the

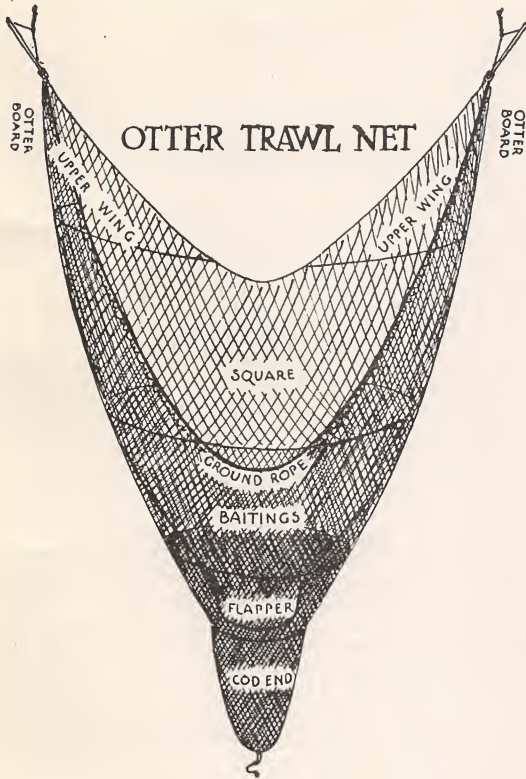
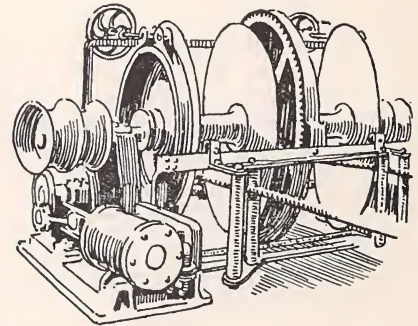


Fig. 4.

mouth, the fish being finally caught, after the sides have gathered them together, in a pocket forming the extreme end. When the net is hauled in, it is hoisted above the deck by tackle at the masthead, this pocket is unlaced, and the fish fall to the deck. The speed of a trawler while the net is out varies from two and a half to five knots.

The principal part of the deck gear is the trawl winch, situated amidships (fig. 6). Two large drums, which can be worked separately or together, carry the drag ropes. From these the latter pass forward to a guiding arrangement known as a fairleader (fig. 7); and from thence, one to each of the two gallows. Before trawling



TRAWL WINCH.

Fig. 6.

can be begun, however, these ropes have to be attached to what are called towing bollards (see fig. 1), and for this purpose they are dragged inboard, or towards the middle of the trawler, by a small 'messenger' chain,

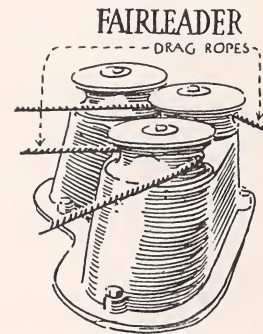
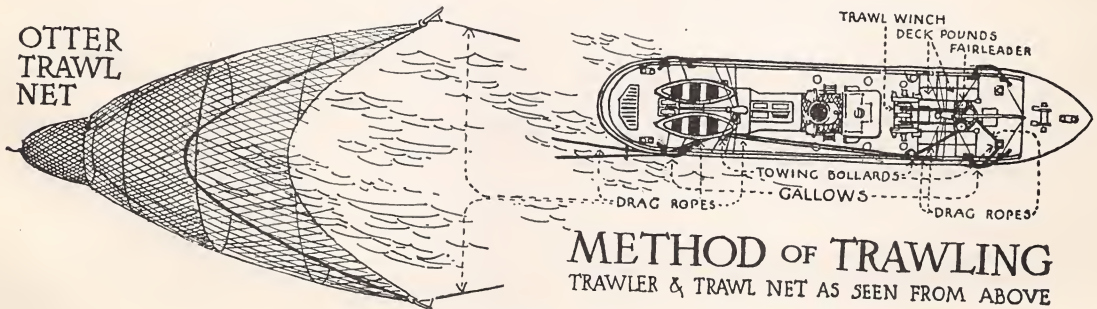


Fig. 7.

worked by the smaller drums seen at either side of the trawl winch.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that all sailors admire the staunch seaworthiness of the little trawler, which is built, on account of the extra strains to which she is subjected, more strongly than the ordinary merchant vessel.

S. W. CLATWORTHY.



METHOD OF TRAWLING TRAWLER & TRAWL NET AS SEEN FROM ABOVE

Fig. 5.

THE SHOEMAKER OF HAMPTON WICK.

THE footway from Hampton Wick, which leads through Bushey Park to Kingston-upon-Thames, had been closed for many years. Timothy Bennett, a shoemaker of Hampton Wick, unwilling (to use his favourite expression) to leave the world worse than he found it, consulted an attorney as to the possibility of regaining this road for public use, and the probable expense of carrying out such a project.

'I do not mean to cobble the job,' said Timothy. 'I have seven hundred pounds, and should be willing to give up the awl to prevent great folks from keeping the upper leather wrongfully.' The lawyer told him that so large a sum would not be required. 'Then,' declared the shoemaker, 'as sure as soles are soles, I'll stick them to the last.'

And so the Ranger of Bushey Park was immediately served with the regular notice of action, upon which he sent for Timothy. 'Who may *you* be,' inquired the noble Ranger, 'who take upon yourself to interfere with me in this matter?'

'My name, my lord,' was the reply, 'is Timothy Bennett, and I am a shoemaker of Hampton Wick. I remember, an't please your lordship, to have seen, when I was a young man sitting at work, the cheerful people pass my shop on their way to Kingston Market. But now, my lord, they have to go a long way round over a hot, sandy road, and when they are carrying a heavy burden they are ready to faint. I am unwilling to leave the world worse than I found it, and that, my lord, is the reason why I have taken this work in hand.' 'Be off with you!' exclaimed the angry Ranger. 'You are an impertinent fellow!'

Upon reflection, however, the Ranger could not help seeing the justice of the claim, and, not caring to expose himself to the humiliation of defeat by a shoemaker, he withdrew his opposition and reopened the road.

Two years later, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, good old Timothy died, and was mourned by all the inhabitants of his native village, to whom he had rendered so great a service. A monument has lately been set up in memory of his courage and public spirit.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

IN the reign of Charles the Second, a French refugee named Du Moulin narrowly escaped being executed as a coiner of bad money. It was proved beyond doubt that he had often been detected in passing false gold. People said that he had even made a practice of 'returning' counterfeit coins to persons from whom he had received money, pretending that these coins were amongst those which had been paid him. When the Officers of Justice sent to arrest him searched his house, they found a large number of false coins in a separate drawer, others mixed with good money in different parcels, some aqua-regia, several files, a pair of moulds, and many other coining implements. Seldom, if ever, has the evidence of circumstances been stronger against a man. Du Moulin, however, flatly denied the charge. His attempts at explanation were very feeble. He said that the bad money found in a heap he had put together because he could not trace the person from whom he had received it. The other money he had kept in different parcels in order that he might know to whom to apply

should any of it prove bad. As for the coining tools, he knew nothing of them, and could not imagine how they got into his house.

'A likely story!' thought the jury, and Du Moulin, found guilty, was sentenced to death.

But a few days before the date fixed for the execution, a seal-engraver named Williams met his death through an accident. His wife, overcome by the shock, became seriously ill. Feeling that she was dying, she sent for the wife of Du Moulin, and confessed to her that Williams, her husband, had been one of four men, whom she named, who for many years had lived by manufacturing false coin. One of the four, she said, had hired himself as a servant to Du Moulin, and, being provided with false keys, had been able to open his master's desk, take out the good money, and leave an equal number of bad coins in its place. As soon as Mrs. Williams had made this statement, she died. On the information of Madame du Moulin, the men named by the dying woman were at once arrested, and one of them turned 'King's evidence.'

The man who had been Du Moulin's servant at first asserted his innocence, but ended by bursting into tears and acknowledging his guilt. On being asked how the coining-tools got into his master's desk, he replied that when the officers came to apprehend Du Moulin, he was terrified lest they should be found in his (the servant's) possession. So he made haste to take them out of his own box, opened his master's desk with his false key, and had just time to close it before the officers entered the room.

The truth being thus made known, Du Moulin, of course, was released, and punishment fell upon the servant and his associates.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEX.

(Continued from page 287.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE moon was high in the sky before the sun had well set, and now, as darkness gathered in the west, threw its soft illusive light over temple and desert: a fleet of feathery clouds were sailing across its face and into the far south. A chill north wind blew steadily, moving no tree-tops in that barren waste, hustling no bushes, bowing no quivering reeds and grasses. It swept round unyielding columns and gathered in the temple corners. The cloud shadows moved silently across the desert, the moonlight danced between colonnade, obelisk, and tower: like silent living water it splashed, as from a cataract, upon the ground, spread among shattered fragments of masonry, swept swiftly over mound, circled around pillar, and raced up the side of the lofty pylons to disappear over the top. There was life—silent, spectral life—where all seemed barren and deserted. A column, a fragment, even a small stone would spring out with sudden brilliance, and then melt slowly into shade. One small human figure moved in this silent dancing dream-world, like the fugitive moonlight—now quick—now stealthy—swift across a moonlit patch, lingering along the shadows. It was Selim—so small a figure

among those towering columns. He had lain all day in the grilling sun on the roof of the tower; he had heard the sounds of the scuffle below, and crouched under the low coping had watched with starting eyes the band of wild men from the south—watched his two young masters in their midst—saw blows descend—saw them urged along with spears and fierce gestures—saw their forms dwindling in the distance, and lost to sight around the rocky spur. He was alone. Fear of the dervishes kept him trembling there: some might have remained behind to further search the ruins, and at any moment might discover his hiding-place—even now a fierce barbarian might be feeling his way up the dark passage of the zig-zag—at any moment he might step out upon the roof—a figure stoop over him with uplifted spear—a great cruel blade—a face as cruel, with gleaming teeth.

He had heard terrible tales of these fierce Soudanese: he had heard of armies ambushed and slaughtered to a man, of prisoners killed in cold blood: he had heard of towns and villages of their own people, who refused to join the Mahdi, killed—man, woman, and child. He lay trembling at the pictures his vivid imagination supplied. He was alone. Where was his master—the Professor? Had he escaped? He certainly was not in the hands of the dervishes when they dragged the boys away. Had he taken refuge in the hiding-place beneath the huge idol in the rock temple, and so escaped the dervishes, or had he returned to the oasis? No, he was sure his master would not leave the neighbourhood of the temple while the boys were prisoners. Had he followed the dervishes to try to effect their escape? No, he thought not; surely he should have seen him from his lofty position on the tower. He must be in the hiding-place, waiting till darkness set in—he must be there. He resolved that when night fell he would make his way to that place which his soul abhorred.

So Selim flitted from stone to stone, from colonnade to wall, across the great court, and darted swiftly over the intervening space between temple and temple. He paused in the shadow to look up at the mighty figures carved in the face of the cliff that guarded the entrance: cloud and moonlight moved slowly over their stony features with magical effect—their eyes appeared to dilate and close—a bitter smile spread over the faces and then a lowering frown. The tunnel-like entrance was black and forbidding. To Selim's mind this temple in the hill-side was a place of horrors where in olden times the heathen with unholy rites had worshipped their cruel idols—where hideous priests perpetrated unspeakable things—where slaves were dragged and offered as sacrifices to revengeful gods. True, the other temple had been used for the same unholy purposes, but that great place lay open to the sky of heaven—daylight and the winds had purged it from its vileness.

But there were feelings at work in Selim's breast that could nerve him, alone and in the night, to pass its terrible portal. He was in, the wind swept round the face of the cliff and entered with him, it was as if he had received a push from behind to hasten his steps. The draught that was a peculiarity of the place was more penetrating in the chill of night. Gradually shapes loomed through the darkness—shapes by no means reassuring to Selim—shapes which were but those of heaps of débris, a few remaining uprights and sprawling buttresses, but indefinite and unexplained. He groped his way to the far end where the stupendous idol sat—

to him the unholy of unholies: the dim form of the colossus rose up above him into obscurity—the king of terrors. There is no retreat for the spirit touched with love and fidelity. He pressed the device above the hawk's head—the pillar revolved—the chamber was empty. Now was Selim's desolation complete: all his resolve and struggle was to have ended here, in claspings the hand of his master. Empty—it was empty.

He was hungry and thirsty, but he did not wait to take the food spread out there, or for a draught of the water. He did not stay to close the opening, but fled stumbling and bruised into the open air, across the spaces of sand and the temple court, heedless of dervishes in ambush, until he arrived panting in Harry's dark-room, and here he crouched in the corner, his only company Harry's camera, which stood against the wall.

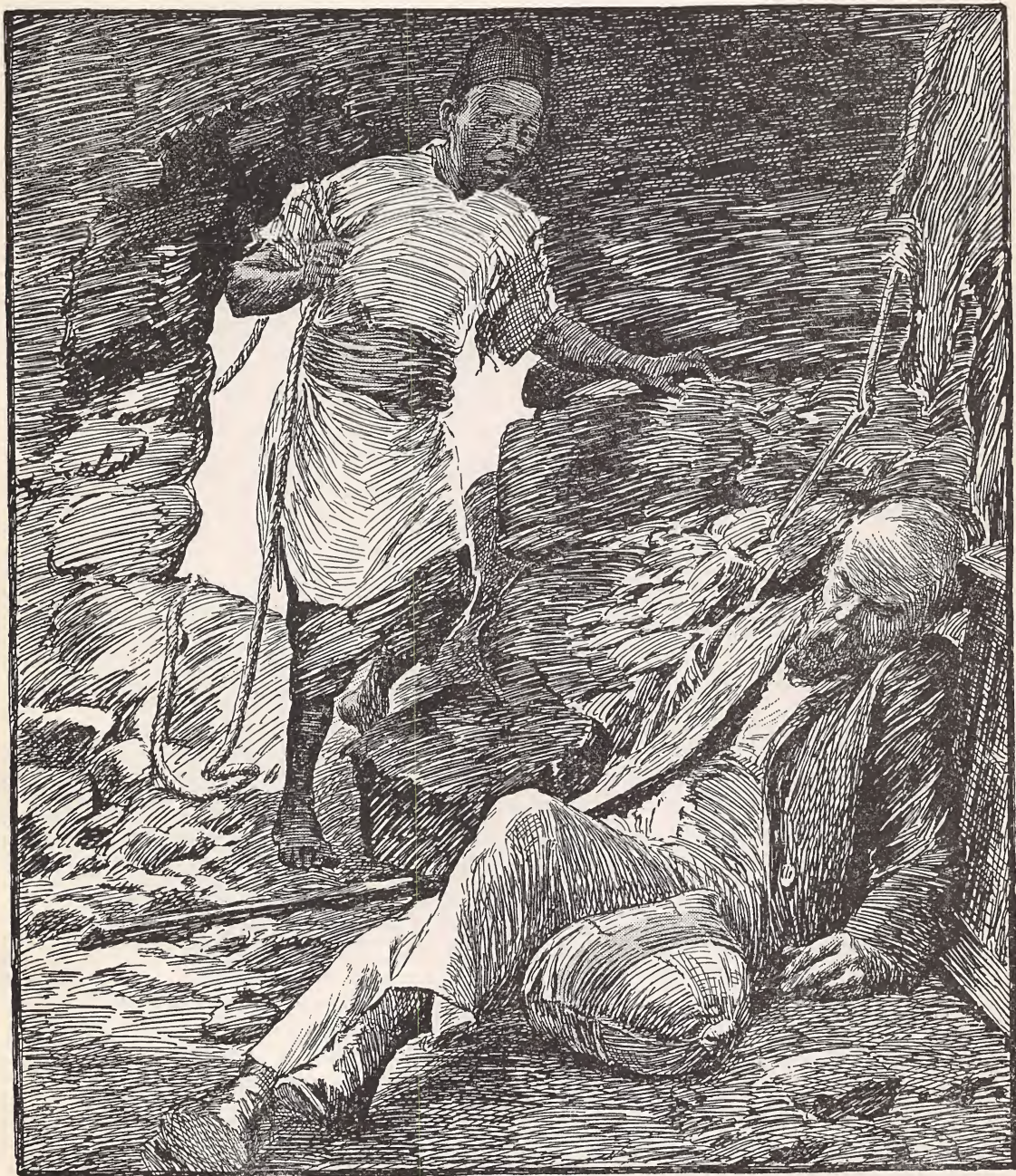
Now, indeed, was his desolation complete. Those on whom he leant, on whom he depended for everything—the firm setting of his life—were all gone: he was alone in the ghostly temple in the wide wilderness. Dozing and waking he thought of the gas-lit streets of Cairo, the streams of busy people, the bazaars and bright shops and chattering groups; the bustling but orderly hotel, the kitchen where he had always found enough to eat in payment for odd jobs done, and which, without parents and home, had been a harbour of refuge to him. Before finding this place he had known what it was to rake over for odd scraps the piles of refuse swept from the shops and restaurants, to struggle with donkey-boys for a crust, and even with dogs for a bone. He had hung about cafés and courted the lowest kinds of hirelings, had been a slave of slaves and the dog of dogs. He thought of the good-natured cook in the kitchen of the hotel, who actually gave him more food than blows: he thought of the great opening in life which spread before him when the Professor took him into his service: his fine garments and high hopes when he started with the expedition to the desert, of his two young masters who had always been kind to him, almost as if he were a brother—of Dick, always breezy and brave, and Harry, who had never even said anything to hurt his feelings; he thought of the Professor who spoke kindly to him, and expected him to be good, and who had never once in the whole time he had served him given him a kick or a blow. So he dozed and shivered and slept. Without, the wind had changed, and blew from the south, and the fleet of clouds that had sailed across the moon returned swollen with heavy freights, a little rain fell in the night—an unusual thing in the Nile Valley.

In the light of morning Selim became more hopeful. The sky was hazy, and, though so early in the day, it was intensely hot, but Selim did not feel the heat; he stood in the sun and absorbed new life from its fierce beams. He found a few biscuits and dates upon the roof of the tower where Harry's satchel and the Professor's coat lay with the disregarded tools close by the windlass; he was also fortunate in discovering that one of the water-bottles was half-full of cold tea. He noticed with indifference the changed aspect of the sky, and that the wind had veered round to the south; he noticed, too, that the Nile was rising: far away to the north, beyond the ridge of rocks which jutted out into the river and formed the cataract, and where the banks were low, and spread out in expansive flats a great stretch of water.

(Continued on page 298.)



“He fled, stumbling and bruised, into the open air.”



"On the floor lay the Professor; he was unconscious."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 295.)

SELIM ate his breakfast as he walked round the temple and among the ruins, in the hope that he might have better fortune by day in his search for the Professor. Keeping a sharp look-out in the direction the dervishes took the previous day, he picked his way among the stones with every precaution against a sudden surprise, but saw nothing of dervishes or Professor. He had almost completed the circuit, and had reached the north front of the temple, and stood beneath the towers where the rope still hung with its loop and the seat lying on the ground. It appeared that the dervishes had not noticed it in their pursuit of the boys. Selim looked on the ground at the foot of the tower to see if he could find any traces of the missing Professor. His glance then travelled slowly up the wall to the place where the opening had been made. He fancied there was something strange in its appearance at that spot. Before the Professor was let down from the roof for the last time they had between them worked out two large stones, and there they lay at Selim's feet, and there were other stones, and there was a small heap of rubbish and cement. With all these stones and rubbish removed there ought to be a good-sized hole in the wall above, he reasoned, but there was not, or, at any rate, he could see none where he stood immediately below the tower. Selim moved further away, where he could get a better view. There was no opening in the wall—only a few long, irregular cracks—but the wall in that part looked crumbled, and it slowly dawned on Selim's mind that the opening had been further forced, but that the walls at the sides or the top had fallen in and blocked it up. Could the Professor have entered the opening before this took place, and been shut in by the fall? Was the Professor inside—caught in a trap? The thought staggered Selim: he shouted and shouted again and threw stones up, and scarcely knew what he did in his excitement; but all was silent and unaltered above, and he began to sober down.

'I must go up and see,' he said to himself. 'I can shout to him through those cracks.' He looked at the sixty feet of rope and a better plan struck him, and he decided to climb down the rope from above. He mounted the tower, and putting a small crowbar and chisel in his pocket and a hammer in his sash, grasped the rope below where it passed over the roller, and swinging himself clear of the coping, let himself down.

At the part where they had been working he found a crevice nearly a foot wide, running diagonally across that portion of the wall. He placed his mouth to this and shouted, but there was no response. Then, working rapidly with the bar, he prised out a few loose stones and succeeded in making a hole clear through. He shouted and listened, but there was no answering voice, but presently he fancied he heard something within. His position was fatiguing, hanging on to the rope with one hand, his legs twisted round it. He kept slipping; he must rest. He had not strength left to climb up and get over the coping, so slipped down the sixty feet of rope to the ground. Before doing so he had marked on

the rope with a piece of crumbling cement the place where he hung, so that, after resting awhile, when he mounted to the roof of the tower again and drew up the rope he could tie a large knot in it, on which he would be able to sit for some time in comparative comfort.

He found this device a great relief, and set about enlarging the hole swiftly, working from the top so that the stones should not fall upon him, and, as they had already been dislodged and the cement broken up, he had soon made a considerable hole. He called 'Fessor, 'Fessor!' and though there was no reply, he could distinctly hear the sound of heavy breathing.

'He's there, he's in there right 'nuf,' he cried gleefully, 'but I expect he's hurt.' He fell to work again feverishly with bar and fingers, and in less than half an hour had wrenched and pulled down sufficient of the wall to allow of his entrance, and with a swing of the rope he was in. He found himself in a chamber about twenty feet square, with no light but that which came through the hole which he had made. It contained a few articles of furniture of ancient make, the remains of linen hangings, and a large painted chest, that looked like a sarcophagus. This was all that showed, with the exception of the only object that caught Selim's eye—extended on the floor lay the Professor, his head propped against the painted chest: he was unconscious and breathed with difficulty. Selim was down on his knees beside him instantly, and had loosened what little there was at his throat in the way of clothing. The face of the injured man was white and his lips parched. Selim looked swiftly round for water, but there was none. The Professor's water-bottle was not on him: he had left it on the tower roof—in fact, it had provided Selim's breakfast in the early morning. Selim darted to the rope, and sliding down, by great good fortune found water in Harry's dark-room, and filling a bottle returned to the chamber by the same method as before. He poured a few drops between the parched lips and watched the effect; it ran over the Professor's beard and trickled down his neck; he tried again, and there was a movement of the lips to take the fluid in. He bathed his temples and chafed his hands, and knelt beside him for a full hour, but the Professor did not return to consciousness. Once or twice he groaned, as though he felt his position uncomfortable, and shivered.

Selim was down the rope again; he seemed to have forgotten the existence of dervishes by the way he exposed himself. He had slung the two water-bottles over his shoulder, and was making a bee-line for the oasis. In half an hour he had the 'ship of the desert' out and was loading it thoughtfully—a cork bed and blankets, an oil-stove, a can of oil, a packet of candles, tea, sugar, an extra box of matches, and two tins of soup from the larder. He filled the water-bottles at the spring, and a large water-skin besides. He seemed to forget nothing, not even the making of the storehouse doubly secure now the 'ship of the desert' was removed; and it was with a heavy load that he toiled over the sandy waste in the blazing sun on the return journey.

To load these necessities for the sick man was one thing, but to get them up to the chamber in the wall was another. However, patience can accomplish formidable tasks: he rolled up the bed and blankets for the first journey and tied them with the signal-cord, then ascending the tower roof, hauled them up to a level with the opening, and made the signal-cord fast, then climbed down the rope to the Scribe's Chamber and drew in the

load. In this fatiguing and tedious manner Selim carried all the stores.

The sick man still lay in an unconscious state when, with much difficulty, for the Professor was a heavy man, he was moved on to the low bed. When Selim lifted his legs he groaned, as though part of his injury lay there, but he had doubtless received a severe blow on the head from falling stones, for his helmet, battered in at the top, lay near the wall. Light was failing when this was accomplished. Selim covered the injured man with a blanket, and lit the oil-stove, in a far corner of the chamber where it would show no light on the outside, and prepared the soup. Night fell; no moon appeared, darkness enfolded the tower, and Selim, saddened and anxious, sat through its hours in the Scribe's Chamber—high up between heaven and earth.

CHAPTER XIX.

THREE days Dick and Harry had been prisoners in the dervish camp; each morning and evening food, of a sort, had been brought to them, with a small supply of water. The heat at mid-day in the close hut was intolerable, and the wind, which had now veered round to the south, brought hot sand with it. Sand was in their eyes and nostrils, and, when they ate their meagre allowance, grated between their teeth; and, to add to their discomfort, the hut was infested with mosquitoes.

A surly man with heavy lips, and eyes that had suffered from the sand of the desert, was their ungracious attendant. No word passed, not even a barbaric salutation in Arabic. Dick had tried him at first with his best pigeon-English, but without effect; he only grunted, as though he thought it a pity good food should thus be thrown away. The boys had no occupations other than watching, as far as could be seen through the narrow opening, what went on outside, and as very little could be seen on this limited field of vision, it became very tame, and they had to fall back on mosquito-killing and conversing with the 'Man of Mystery.' This latter relieved the monotony considerably, for it appeared that their strange companion in misfortune had, in the past, been familiar with the English language, but that time had erased it, or his memory had broken down. As they talked he listened attentively, picking up the thread of their meaning, and interjecting phrases in English, oftentimes wide of the mark it is true, which quite astonished them with his knowledge of the language, and not such language as was picked up by hotel-keepers and natives in the Cairo bazaars, but vestiges of the language of great books and lofty thoughts. Occasionally he would break from a fit of abstraction with a lengthy quotation from a classic, but invariably, in these cases, he broke down before coming to the end, or dwindled off into incoherence. It appeared that his mind was gradually recovering buried treasures.

This surprise had come to Harry at the first by hearing him repeat 'The Lord's Prayer' in English. This he did rapidly, and it seemed that if swiftly uttered and in sing-song tones, half-forgotten words came to him more readily. At another time he recovered all the names of things that Dick and Harry mentioned, and soon had them all readily on the tip of his tongue. After such a feat he would smile whimsically at his own recollection. He was, however, reticent of his personal affairs, and made no attempt to give any account of himself, remaining more than ever the 'Man of Mystery.' (Continued on page 306.)

GOOD COUNSEL.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE, the wife of George the Third, was one day in the royal nursery, when one of her children, the Duchess of Gloucester, at that time about six years old, ran to her, with tears in her eyes and a book in her hand.

'Madam,' said the child, 'I cannot comprehend it.' ['Comprehend' seems rather a long word for a child of six to use, but perhaps the Princess, though she felt herself ignorant, was 'forward' for her age.]

The Queen gently comforted her little daughter. 'What you cannot comprehend to-day,' she said, 'you may comprehend to-morrow, and what you cannot attain to this year you may arrive at the next. Do not, therefore, be frightened with little difficulties, but attend to what you do know, and the rest will come in time.'

ONLY JUST IN TIME.

NOT far from Abbotsford, the beautiful residence of Sir Walter Scott, there is an estate, named Yair, which about two hundred years ago belonged to a family called Pringle. A little further north, not far from Bowland, there was an old tower belonging to the same family. The Pringles were one of the most ancient border families, and Whitebank, as the tower was named, was their oldest residence, to which the estate at Yair had been added at a time of increasing prosperity.

In 1745 the owner of Yair and Whitebank joined in the rising under Charles Edward Stuart, the grandson of James II., commonly spoken of as the Young Pretender. Mr. Pringle raised soldiers to fight for the young Prince, and lent large sums of money to aid him in his attempt to seize the country. But after some successes in the field, and a march into England as far as Derby, the Prince was driven back to Scotland, and defeated at Culloden. The defeat brought untold misfortune to the Prince's supporters. Mr. Pringle escaped with his life, but he lost so much in wealth that he was reduced almost to distress. He was forced to part with his estate at Yair, which he sold to the Duke of Buccleuch, and he went to live at Whitebank in a very humble way.

A neighbour, Lord Elibank, procured a situation in India for Mr. Pringle's son, and the young man proved worthy of the assistance. He devoted himself to his duties, and by using every care in his own expenses, he was able to send small sums to his father from time to time, which helped the old man to struggle on amidst his great difficulties.

In course of time, however, a number of misfortunes crowded upon the owner of Whitebank, and he found that he would have to sell the old tower, now his only home, in order to pay his debts. But, before he took this step, he wrote to the son who had been so dutiful to him, and told him how much he disliked the course which he was about to take. Months passed by, and he received no answer to this letter. At last he was compelled to take the necessary steps for selling the old tower, and he drew up an advertisement offering it for sale, and sent a messenger to Edinburgh to put the advertisement in the papers. The messenger brought back a packet. It was from India, from the laird's son, and it had been delayed on the voyage for a long time. It contained enough money to save the old tower of Whitebank. The advertisement was withdrawn, and the old

laird continued to live at Whitebank until he died, receiving from time to time enough money from his son to enable him to live comfortably.

Meanwhile, the son was growing wealthy, and shortly after his father died he resigned his post in India, and returned to Scotland. His mother was still alive, and he resolved to find a house near Whitebank, so that he could be near to her and his sisters who were living with her. The Duke of Buccleuch, learning of his intentions, offered to sell him back the estate at Yair at the same price at which his father had sold it. Mr. Pringle accepted the offer gladly. In a short time he built a new house, planted great woods, and laid out a handsome estate. And so, even while his mother lived, the old estates came back into the family, and the mistakes and misfortunes of 1745 were, as far as was possible, rectified.

W. A. ATKINSON.

THE CLOCK'S SECRET.

I HAD a secret told me—it was told me by the clock;
At first I thought it only said, 'Tick-tock, tick-tock,
tick-tock;'

But when I listened carefully its language, I could tell,
Was really very simple, and I understood it well.

And this is what it said to me, as I inclined my ear
(It really quite astonished me the confidence to hear):
It said, 'When you have gone to bed, and I strike one,
two, three,

The things upon the mantelshelf awake and have a
spree!

'The little china shepherdess springs off her grassy
mound,
And dances with the shepherd, tripping gaily round and
round—

To tiny tinkling music of the crystal lustre-ware,
Played by the little china-men, who nod their heads and
stare.

'The china dragons beat the time, and wave their
pointed tails,
And softly play accompaniment up and down their
scales;

But when the sun climbs out of bed and pops up o'er
the hill,
The things upon the mantelshelf at once become quite
still.

'They take a nap the livelong day, and far into the
night,
Until I strike my one, two, three, and then you'll see
the sight;

But you must very softly creep across the landing floor,
And only take a little peep behind the half-shut door.'

J. FISHER ROBINSON.

THE GOOD DOG.

THE great French writer, Victor Hugo, used to tell charming tales to his grandchildren, a little girl named Jeanne and a little boy named Georges. One of these tales—perhaps the greatest favourite of all—was the story of the Good Dog. Here it is in an English dress.

Once upon a time there lived a very good dog, whose name I cannot now recollect. He had an excellent nature, but unfortunately he was very ugly. He dragged one paw, and was partly blind in one eye. He seldom took a bath, but that was partly the fault of the very naughty little boy who was his master. The boy never said a kind word to the dog. He called him 'Dirty Dog,' and when no one was looking (for even bad people are ashamed to be seen doing wrong) he would often kick the poor animal, saying, 'There, take that!'

The dog cried, as dogs do cry when they are beaten, and once he ran away; but he soon came back, because it was said that wolves were abroad in the land, and he had been told to take care of the little boy.

One day, when the naughty boy was beating the good dog, a hungry wolf came out of the wood. He thought that the dog would be glad to get rid of such a bad master, but in this he was very much mistaken. When the wolf attempted to bite the little boy, the dog flew at him furiously. There was a great fight, in which the good dog, though badly bitten, was the victor. The wild beast fled into the forest.



"There was a great fight."

The boy, trembling, had hidden himself behind a tree. He had picked up a big stick with which to defend himself. When the good dog, rejoicing in his victory, came running to him, he spoke in a very angry tone. 'You wretched beast!' he exclaimed. 'How you frightened me by fighting with that dreadful wolf!'

And the naughty boy broke his stick upon the poor dog, who ran away, whining.

A few days later the boy and the dog had another adventure. The naughty boy stood on the edge of a pond. He had provided himself with pebbles, intending to throw them horizontally, and make them make 'ducks and drakes' along the surface of the water. The dog, after being rebuffed several times, had sat himself down on the bank, and was looking on while his master played. All at once the boy slipped and fell into the water. Splash! splash! gurgles! gurgles! The boy was swallowing the water, and was on the point of drowning, when the good dog, who had instantly plunged into the pond, gripped him by the collar of his jacket and bore him safely to the shore.



"The good dog bore him safely to the shore."

But in rescuing the boy the dog had torn the jacket just a tiny bit, and the little boy had lost his cap. So, instead of being grateful for his escape, the naughty boy flew into a rage. The patient creature again jumped into the water to fetch the cap, and the boy actually flung stones at him, and tried to drown him. The poor dog, however, managed to get himself out of the water, and went on with his miserable existence.



"The boy actually flung stones at him."

He felt ill. He was scarred and thin, and dirtier than ever, for his half-drowning in the pond had given him a great dread of water. Yet still he followed his master everywhere.

One day the naughty boy took it into his head to climb up an apple-tree and steal some apples. This

tree belonged to a farmer who never gave quarter to robbers, but shot them at sight, and who, it was said, would have killed a man for taking a single pippin.

The boy thought that the farmer was away. Up the tree he went, in spite of the barking of his companion, which meant, 'You are doing wrong; you are a thief!' The naughty boy hurled at the good dog a green apple, as hard as a stone, which hit the poor creature full in the forehead, and made a big bump. But at that very moment the young thief saw the terrible farmer, gun in hand, standing beside the hedge.

'Have you the money to pay me for my apples?' he roared.

The boy had not a farthing. Horribly frightened, thinking that he was going to be killed, he cried, 'Come to me, my dog!'

Then something very wonderful happened. You know that, as a rule, dogs cannot climb trees. Yet this old



"A transformed creature."

dog jumped, bounded and rebounded like a gutta-percha ball, clutched the branches with his teeth, and got in front of his unworthy master just as the gun went off.

He received the charge in his own breast.

His dying eyes turned to beg help from his master, but the little coward was already far away, running across the fields as fast as his legs could carry him.

And this is what, according to Victor Hugo's fancy, the farmer saw.

Through the smoke of the shot appeared a transformed creature. The good dog was no longer black and dirty; a beautiful light shone and glowed all around him. The hair about his fine head had become longer and more lustrous: his face wore a celestial expression, and great wings grew out of his back.

* * * * *

Once, after Victor Hugo had told this story, his little grandson, Georges, asked what became of the good dog's wicked master.

'He remained wicked,' replied the grandfather; 'and he was severely punished for it. *Nobody loved him.*'

E. DYKE.

THE CANDLE-SNUFF FUNGUS.

IN these days, many of us do not make much acquaintance with candles. What we have are unlike the tallowy, thick-wicked candles our ancestors knew well, which, if they were blown out, left a long black snuff and a disagreeable smell.

There is a curious object to which attention is sometimes drawn during the earlier months of the year, a product of winter's moisture, which is called the candle-snuff fungus. Strolling about a garden where sticks or odd bits of wood have been left through the winter, we may notice resting upon them near the earth, small black velvety growths with whitened tips. One or two inches is their usual height, but now and then they are double that; occasionally there may be a little cluster of them, oftener two or three only. The blackish velvety part of the fungus is tough and corky, but the tip is softer, and looks as if it had been dusted with flour or chalk. This tip is frequently branched; hence another name for it, the 'stag's-horn fungus.' While fresh, they have a mouldy smell; dried, they will keep unchanged for years. If we take some of the powdery substance, and put it in a drop of water under a microscope, we find it consists of a host of narrow, colourless cells, each of which is fastened to a transparent jointed thread.

The young plants come from seeds or spores, which are wafted along in the air. When the warm weather comes, the tops of the candle-snuff fungus begin to look brown and swelled, along the upper part are numerous black points, which are cells. On cutting open one of these tops towards the end of summer, we discover that it contains numerous spores, brownish and rounded, with slightly pointed ends. These travel away by little holes which open in the top.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 291.)

CHAPTER V.

THE boys stood for a moment in silence, looking at the light that went to and fro up there on the hill close to the silver birch.

'Some one is looking for that paper, I suppose,' said Jim presently.

'Yes, that may be so, but I wonder who it is?' mused Stanley. 'It cannot very well be any one living in the house, for in that case it would not be necessary to take all the trouble to hide the paper in the tree.'

'No, it looks rather as though it was intended for some one who lives outside. The question is, who is that some one?'

'What's the time?' asked Stanley, pulling out his watch as he spoke. 'Oh, it is after eight; but still, that won't matter, I should think. What do you say to riding along the lane, and waiting to see if any one comes out of the grounds? Very likely, if it is some one from the village, he will come out the same way that we did this morning. It is about the only place where you can climb the walls.'

'It will not make us much later,' said Raymond, and then they rode off along the lane.

'We won't light the lamps till we want to ride home,' said Stanley. 'We are not likely to meet anything.'

At the gate that led into the meadow they dismounted, and, lifting their machines over the gate, settled down to wait. It was not safe for them to go close to the wall, as there was nothing there which could screen them from sight if any one chanced to pass that way, and though it was dusk it was not dark enough to render them invisible.

The light was still hovering about in the region of the silver birch. Sometimes it was stationary for a few moments, and then it moved on again. It was clear to the three watchers that, whoever it was up there by the tree, he was searching for something which proved hard to find.

'Now it has gone out,' said Jim at last, when they were beginning to think they would have to go home with their curiosity unsatisfied. 'Yes, now in a moment or two, perhaps, we shall see who it is that has been up there,' said Raymond, looking intently before him through the gathering dusk.

They were well in the shadow of the hedge, and at some little distance from the gate, so that when at last they heard footsteps approaching they did not feel any fear that their whereabouts would be discovered. Soon a figure came into sight, and a man, rather tall and stout, climbed over the gate and went away down the lane.

'I don't see that this waiting has done us much good,' said Jim, as, getting on their machines once more, they rode off in the direction of the Grange. 'We waited long enough, but saw jolly little. You couldn't tell who that fellow was, could you, Stan?'

'No. Of course it was too dark to see him properly; but I think if he had been one of the people about the village I should have recognised him. I think he must be a stranger; but perhaps we shall overtake him.'

This is exactly what they did at that moment, for as they rounded a bend in the lane they came suddenly upon the man whom they had been speaking of the moment before. He was walking swiftly along the lane towards the high road, and as they flashed past him the boys had time to see by the light of their bicycle lamps that they had not been mistaken in thinking that this was a stranger. Neither of the Railtons had ever seen him before, of that they were confident; and they were well acquainted with all the people in the village. 'He cannot have been here long, or we should have met him before this,' said Stanley, when they were out of earshot. 'I wonder if he is staying in the village, and if so, where. We shall have to find out.'

'I think it would be more to the point if we succeeded in finding out about Jinks,' said Jim, as they turned into the drive that led up to their own door. 'It is rather sickening to think of him being lost like this. I can't understand it at all.'

'No, it is queer, and I am certain, somehow, that it was he whom we heard this morning,' said Stanley, 'but we will go there to-morrow and search again.'

They found every one at home wondering what had become of them, for it was half-past nine, and quite dark into the bargain.

'There is some supper for you in the dining-room,' said Aunt Eliza. 'The girls have something to tell you, so they will join you there and talk whilst you eat; and then I think it will be time for bed. Early to bed, you know.'

'We ought to know, if we don't,' said Jim as soon as

Aunt Eliza had left them. 'Auntie says that on an average seven times a week, when we are at home.'

'We have heard some news,' said Joan, as they entered the dining-room where supper was waiting for the boys. 'It was this afternoon when we were coming home from Chüdley.'

'Well, what is it?' asked Stanley, who was making havoc of a plate of thick bread and butter. Their tea was only a memory and they all had keen appetites.

'Well, we were coming down Winthorpe Hill this afternoon as we came home, and Father said that he had to see old Mrs. Bedford who lives in that little cottage at the bottom of the hill. We waited outside in the car, and when Father came out he said that he had heard something about Jinks.'

Joan paused, for she wanted to notice the effect that her words had on the three boys, and also, it must be confessed, to cause them suspense.

'Well?' asked Stanley, whilst Jim said, 'Cut the cackle, Joan, there's a good chap.'

'Mrs. Bedford said that on Monday night her son went to see her, and he remarked that he had seen a fox-terrier going in at the front entrance to Dene Manor.'

'The silly ass!' exclaimed Jim, with his mouth full. 'Just as though he need have gone in there.'

'Do you mean Jinks, or Mrs. Bedford's son?' asked Norah, laughing.

'Jinks, of course. Well, what then?'

'She said that her son tried to coax him away, knowing that once in there he stood a very good chance of getting shot; but he couldn't get him to come, though he called and whistled for a long time.'

'Is that all?' asked Raymond. He did not see that this information was of any great use to them.

'No, it isn't quite all,' said Norah. 'Tell them the rest, Joan.'

'Father said that if it really was Jinks who went in there, he would go and ask to see the owner of the Manor,' said Joan briefly.

'I always did think that Father was a sportsman,' said Stanley, warmly. 'When is he going?'

'He has gone now. He went as soon as he had seen all the patients, and we can stay up till he comes home. He took Thompson with him in the car, so he ought not to be so very long.'

'The question is, how will he get in?' said Jim, with a frown on his brow. 'Those gates are locked, so is the side-door, the little one, I mean; and it is not likely that he would go in the way that we did this morning.'

'No, of course he would not. But the gates were unlocked this afternoon when we passed, and there were marks of wheels on the drive,' said Joan.

'What on earth is happening there?' cried Stanley, who was greatly surprised at this announcement. 'I should not think such a thing has ever happened before, has it?'

'I don't know. You see people may go there sometimes without our seeing them. It is only that the gates have always been locked when we have passed that way, and the place so covered with weeds and deserted-looking,' said Joan, slowly. 'Listen! I think that is the motor now,' she added after a pause. 'Yes, it is. Now perhaps we shall hear something.'

They flocked out into the hall to meet the Doctor, who was just letting himself in.

'Hullo, here you are then! Well, I have not much to report, but come into the dining-room and I will tell

you all that there is for you to know,' he said, pulling off his light overcoat.

The children followed him into the room, and sat down, eagerly waiting to hear what he should have to say.

'Well,' began the Doctor, 'I have been into the ogre's castle, and come out alive. That is something, isn't it? But I am sorry to say that Mr. Haverford does not know anything about Jinks. He said that he thought, yesterday, when walking about his grounds, that he heard a dog bark; but he has not seen a glimpse of one, nor have any of his servants.'

'But if Jinks is there, will they shoot him?' asked Joan anxiously.

'No, dear; that I can promise you; for I asked especially that he might not be touched. The old gentleman is decidedly queer, and exceedingly grumpy, but I should think that he is a gentleman and will keep his word.'

'How did you get in there, Father? Was the gate open?' asked Stanley.

'Yes, but it was locked after I came out. A servant, the dumb man who haunts the shops in the village, went with me, and locked it as soon as I had got out.'

'And is he mad? People say that he is,' asked Joan with interest.

'No, he is not mad, but queer, decidedly queer,' said her father. 'I do not know much more than you do about him, but this much I am certain of, and that is that he is trying to invent something or other, and that if he is not successful it is most probable that he will be really mad. And so he will if his secret is discovered. He hinted to me, when he got a trifle less cross, that he had to live in seclusion on account of some very important work that was entrusted to him.'

'Oh, well, when we get Jinks back we'll leave him in peace,' said Raymond.

'Did you say that we had been in the grounds this morning?' asked Jim suddenly.

'No, I most certainly did not; and I should advise you not to repeat that performance,' said his father, with a suggestion of severity creeping into his tones. 'It would not be at all wise, and if you were detected there would be trouble—of that I am certain.'

This was unfortunate, for they had made up their minds to go again to the forbidden spot the very next morning, and now in the face of what the Doctor had just said they could scarcely do this. Yet if they did not, how was Jinks to be found?

'Will Mr. Haverford let us know if they see Jinks?' asked Norah, putting into words the thought that was in all their minds.

'Yes, he told me that he would send word if the dog were found on his premises, and we shall have to content ourselves with that. I have offered a reward, and perhaps that will bring some information. And now it is time that you were all in bed, so good-night, and don't dream of Jinks.'

'It is a nuisance about going to the Manor,' grumbled Jim when he and Stanley were undressing. 'It is not as though there were the least danger of our being spotted.'

'Well, I don't think I should wake early to-morrow in any case,' said Stanley who had had so little sleep the night before that he was very tired now. 'We shall have a chance of discovering something to-morrow. Anyway they won't shoot him, and that is something.'

(Continued on page 310.)



"A man climbed over the gate and went away down the lane."



"One of the Sheikhs addressed them."

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By WILLIAM RAINY.

(Continued from page 299.)

DICK had worked a small hole with his fingers in the brushwood at the back of the shelter, which enabled him to make observations in the rear, but little came under his notice in this direction. They had made a discovery the previous day which had filled them with hope, and Harry's spirits had greatly revived. The discovery was nothing less than this: Omar, the dervish whom they had aided to escape and whom they had succeeded on board the dahabeeah, was among this gathering of the tribesmen. It came about in this way. In the morning the two boys had been brought out from the shelter and conducted to the open space in the centre of the camp; they were halted before the large tent which was evidently that of the chief in command. Two horses stood before it in the charge of slaves, and on each side of the entrance was drawn up a bodyguard of stalwart dervishes; it was among this bodyguard that the boys recognised Omar. He gave them one sharp glance, then turned his face sideways from them, and so remained. They knew that ingratitude was not one of the vices of the Arab, and that if Omar could help them in any way they were sure he would do so.

Had it not been for this ray of light their spirits would have sunk very low. They were surrounded by hostile faces, and now saw many things calculated to fill them with horror and despair which were not visible from the opening of their shelter. The number of their enemies and the rapidity with which tents and huts had sprung up in the rear of their prison, rendered unaided escape impossible. Around them were evidences of the relentless cruelty of their captors and their complete indifference to human suffering. They saw a gang of slaves hauling a rough trolley containing stores up the slope, the driver's whip of rhinoceros-hide cracking unmercifully around their bare shoulders. In a corner of the zareeba, not far from the spot where the boys stood, two wretched slaves sat almost doubled, each wearing a wooden yoke shaped like the letter Y about their necks, the long arm of the Y projecting in front of them. They sat huddled together, for any movement of the one caused the other agonies of suffocation from the pressure of the cleft in the yoke on the poor wretches' throat. They were heavily loaded with chains and their heads bare to the fierce rays of the sun.

At last two Arabs of importance came from the tent and questioned the prisoners. One was clad much as the other dervishes, but the other wore a turban and jibbeh, or robe, with broad chocolate stripes, and pistols were in their sashes. They carried themselves haughtily. A thin man with the slenderest legs conceivable, and wearing on his head a fez, acted as interpreter.

The main object of the examination of the prisoners was apparently to ascertain the number and importance of the party to which the boys belonged, and what was their business in so remote a spot. One of the Sheikhs addressed them—a man with keen eyes, a long, straight nose, and a fringe of beard around his face. His manner was disdainful in the extreme. The man in the fez interpreted: 'My lord, the Emir, says, "How many men in your party?"'

'One man and three boys,' replied Dick.

'The Emir says, "Where are other two?"'

Dick replied: 'I don't know. They were with us yesterday; I don't know where they are now.'

'My lord says, "What do you in the desert?"'

'We are travellers. We came to see Egypt, and examine the great temples.'

'My lord, the Emir, says, "He know you well. You are grave-robbers; you steal the gold, you take the bodies of the dead to your country—to Ingletterra—to work charms against the faithful. You are also spies."'

'Tell the Emir,' said Dick, nodding his head energetically and thrusting it forward, 'it is not true. We are not spies. We are not soldiers. The Emir does not fight against boys.'

The Emir's lip curled when this was interpreted.

'My lord, the Emir, says, "He does not fight against boys, but he crush the eggs of the crocodile—he wait not till the teeth grow. He say, all the foreigners are the enemy—the kaffir—the infidel, they come to steal, and poison the hearts of the faithful. It is the word of the Prophet."'

Dick had nothing to reply.

'My lord says, "Do you know the infidel Fakir who is also in the tent with you?"'

'No,' replied Dick. 'We met him two or three days ago, but we don't know who he is. We don't know anything about him.'

This ended the interview, and the boys were marched back to their prison. Dick, as usual, had done all the talking, but Harry had kept his eyes open, and noticed that Omar had bent his head forward and listened attentively to questions and answers.

The 'Man of Mystery' seemed glad to have them back again, as if he had had some doubts on this point: but the dervish posted at the entrance of the hut with great bladed spear looked as if he were tired of his office, and would willingly have found a shorter method of dealing with the 'kaffirs.' The boys discussed over and over again the appearance of Omar, and wondered if he would be able to help them. Was his position in this wild army of sufficient importance to enable him to influence the councils of the Emir, or would he secretly devise some means of favouring their escape? Later in the day they saw him pass their prison at some little distance with his eyes bent upon the ground, but from his peep-hole at the back Dick saw him again, and judged that he made a circuit of the camp. The boys thought that if they could but get outside the camp in the direction of the well they could creep along the dry bed of the stream, and if the camp was not roused, they could elude the dervish posted at the mouth of the ravine. There would be nothing to prevent their making for the Rock Temple and the hiding-place, where they would be secure till the search was over.

'If we could get clear of the huts at night and have a clear hour before any alarm was given, we should be all right,' said Dick to Harry. 'I know the direction by the stars; but there's that big beast of a dervish or his twin brother on guard in front all the time, and we couldn't work our way out at the back without being seen,' he added dismally.

The Man of Mystery's evident relief at seeing them return safe and sound, and his remarks concerning 'men of blood' and the dark places of the earth being full of cruelty, taken with what the boys had seen with their own eyes, were not reassuring.

'Surely the Emir would not put us to death in cold blood,' said Harry. Dick agreed that this was not likely, but in his own mind did not like the parable of the crocodile's eggs one bit. The look-out was dark, and if Uncle Charlie did not come soon with help, who could tell what he would find when he did come? Unless Omar could effect their escape. Omar—why, there he was coming straight to the hut, carrying a bowl containing their allowance of food and a skin of water. A few words in a surly tone to the dervish on guard, and Omar stood within the entrance and placed the bowl on the ground before them. He did not speak a word, and silenced them with a warning fore-finger, then placed it on his lips, and after pointing to the amulet hanging from Dick's watch-chain, he filled their water-gourds and went away. To the boys this dumb show meant everything. Dick's spirits bounded, he took off his dilapidated straw hat and gave a voiceless hurrah!

'It's all right,' he said. 'He will manage it somehow, Harry, he will manage it.' 'It's all right,' he repeated to the Man of Mystery, with a nudge. 'That man's our friend. We did him a good turn once, and he's one of the right sort, and doesn't forget it. We shall escape. We shall take you with us, old gentleman, so get out your travelling suit and pack your trunks.'

(Continued on page 318.)

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

VIII.—OUDENARDE.

OUDENARDE, or Audenarde, is an old city which lies midway between Brussels and Ypres. It has, like many other Belgian towns, a very eventful story, but English people chiefly remember its name in connection with the battle which was fought under the walls in 1708, when the Duke of Marlborough won a great victory over the French.

It is a pity that this battle, important though it was, should completely dwarf Oudenarde's other adventures, for a study of these helps us to realise what a great part Belgium has always taken in European history, and how closely it has been connected with England.

We must go back first to the end of the fourteenth century, when the men of Ghent revolted against their tyrannical ruler, the Count of Flanders. The rebels, who were led by the famous Philip van Artevelde, soon collected a powerful army, and, after making themselves masters of Ghent itself, they captured Bruges, and besieged the strongly fortified town of Oudenarde.

The great historian, Sir John Froissart, describes the siege in his *Chronicles*. He tells us how Artevelde brought one hundred thousand men against the city, with cannons and great engines; how the river was blocked with timber so that reinforcements and provisions should not be brought in by boat, and how the defenders of Oudenarde refused to surrender, and from time to time sallied out and engaged their enemies in battle.

At last a great French army advanced from the south. Artevelde marched to meet it, and was defeated and killed at Rosbeque, near Ypres.

On hearing the news of this battle, the besiegers fled and the town was saved; but later, when the English

had come to help the Flemish patriots in their struggle, it was captured by Sir Francis Akerman. In 1384, however, it again changed hands, being taken by surprise by Escanoy, a knight in the army of the Count of Flanders, who entered the city by a trick, although there was a truce between France and England at the time.

Escanoy arranged that a number of large waggons should come to Oudenarde laden with provisions. The door was opened to admit them, but while they were passing through, an accident, which had been carefully arranged beforehand, occurred. The pin-bolt of one of the waggons was withdrawn, the vehicle could not be moved, and in consequence the gate could not be shut. At this moment Escanoy appeared at the head of a party of soldiers who had been in ambush; they forced their way through the entrance, and the city was captured.

This is not the only siege in Oudenarde's history, for exactly two hundred years later it was attacked and invested by a powerful Spanish army under the Duke of Parma. Once more the Flemings were assisted by British troops. The defenders of the city were at first confident of success, and they sent messages to their friends in Ghent saying that they had strengthened their fortifications, had plenty of food and ammunition, and would die rather than surrender.

The resolution of the brave citizens was, however, equalled by that of their enemy, who had determined to take Oudenarde at all costs, and who managed to block the river and to bring up the best artillery once again. Parma was one of the greatest generals of the century, and he did not hesitate to fight side by side with his men, or to take a spade and help in the work of digging entrenchments. We are told that he even had his meals near the walls of the town, a drum-head being used as a table. On one occasion the strange picnic was broken up by cannon-balls fired from the city, and three of the guests were killed on the spot.

As the summer months wore away, the defenders of Oudenarde began to despair, for, in spite of promises, no help came from outside; and the assaults grew more and more frequent and violent. Unfortunately, too, there were traitors in the town itself, and in a letter to Lord Walsingham, written on July 1st, there is an account of how a miller leapt from the wall, swam across the moat, and gave the enemy information about the weak spots in the defences.

Two days later, another letter tells that the soldiers had promised to hold good to the last man; but the courageous decision could not be carried out. The civil inhabitants of the town grew dissatisfied, there were disputes, and the position seemed hopeless. The end came during a terrible storm of wind and rain, which compelled the defenders of the walls to seek shelter. This opportunity was chosen by the enemy for a furious attack, and after many hours of fighting the city was captured. This catastrophe took place almost under the eyes of the Duke of Anjou, who was on his way to the relief of the city.

More than a hundred years passed away, and once more, in 1708, during the War of the Spanish Succession, British troops were fighting in Flanders. This time the French were the enemy, and in the summer of this year they captured Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. Oudenarde was then besieged, but it was quickly relieved by the Duke of Marlborough at the head of a large army. A great battle was fought, in which the French were defeated.

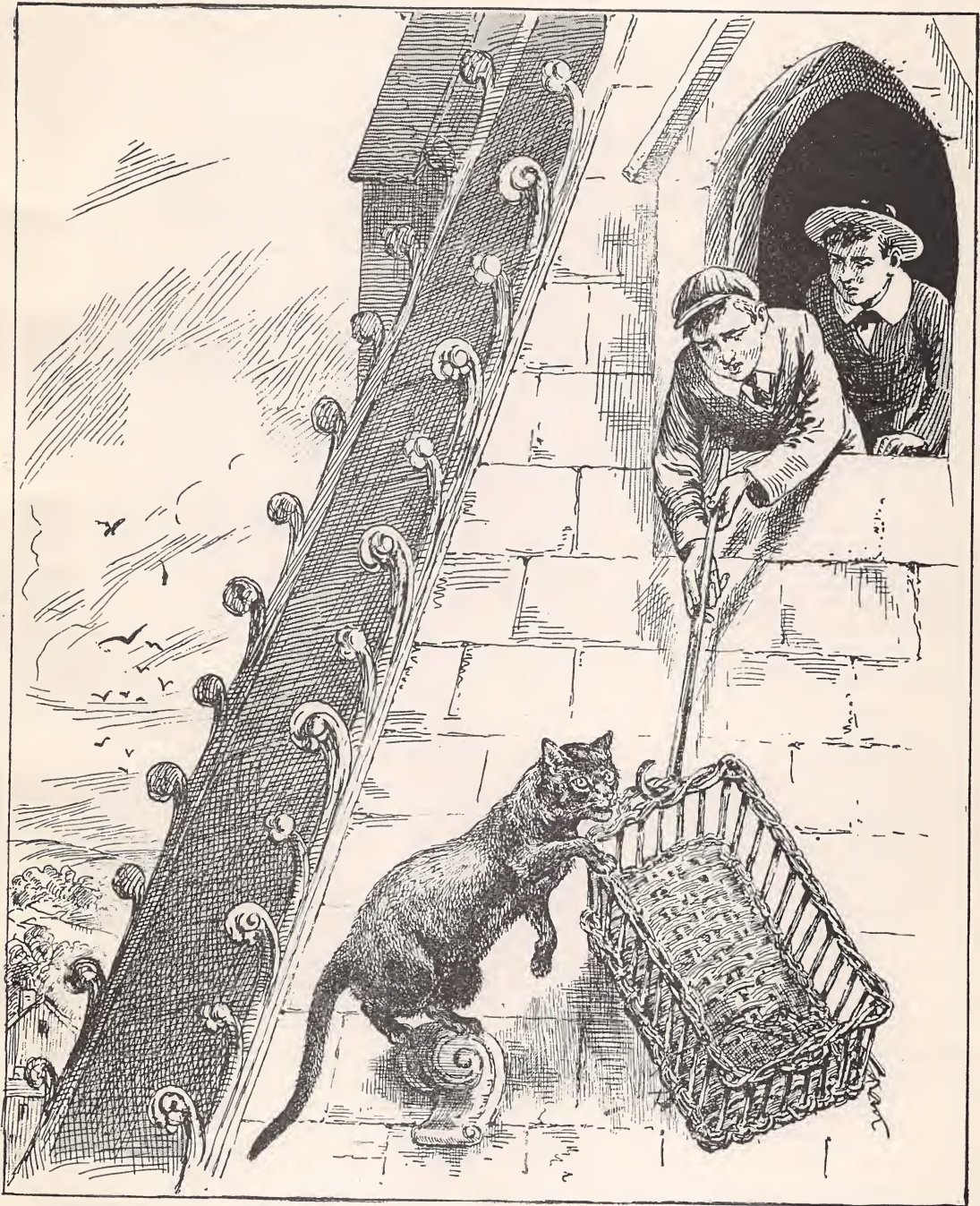


"A party of soldiers had been in ambush."

There is a very quaint old ballad written soon after the battle, telling how

'A woeful fight of late there did
At Audenard befall.'

The poet goes on to describe how two little princes of the Royal Blood of France witnessed the great conflict from the spire of a neighbouring church; and how, when night fell, and they found themselves deserted by their



"The cat very cautiously put forth one paw."

PUSSY IN PERIL.

friends, the boys escaped into a wood, and wandered about there hand-in-hand, until they were discovered by the Duke of Marlborough, who straightway ordered his men to retreat. We are not told what happened after this!

A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.

AS the people of a certain town were going to church one fine summer Sunday evening, so many of them stopped and gazed upward that a large crowd was soon gathered on the spot. This crowd attracted

the attention of two policemen, and they, too, looked up. What did they see?

A black cat, clinging for dear life to a projecting ornament near the top of a tall church steeple.

'How did it get there?' said the people one to another; and the next question was, 'How will it get down?'

The terrified creature was looking down on the people, mewling as though appealing to them for help. Once it slipped, and exclamations of pity came from the crowd. But the cat's claws caught on another projection, and so for the moment it was safe.

Some of the onlookers suggested that the cat should be shot in order to 'put it out of its misery,' but no one cared to be the shooter.

Presently a small window in the steeple, at some distance above the cat, was seen to open. Two boys, determined to save the animal, had mounted the stairs to the belfry, and then, by means of a ladder, had reached the window. They had with them a board which they held by one end and lowered towards the cat.

But this plan did not answer. The cat put out a paw distrustfully, but quickly drew it back, and at that moment one of the boys accidentally let the board slip from his grasp. It turned over, and had Puss trusted to its support the poor creature must have been dashed to the ground. The boys, however, tried again, this time with a basket, which they managed to push out of the window, and lower to the cat, which evidently approved of this plan, for it ceased to cry, and eagerly watched the basket as it came nearer and nearer. When it was within reach the cat very cautiously put forth one paw, then another, and took hold of the basket's side; then it drew itself up, and with a violent effort flung itself over the side into the bottom of the basket. The next moment, amid the cheers of the spectators, the cat was drawn up into safety.

E. D.

SNOW IN SUMMER!

A SNOW-STORM in the Summer,
Sounds very strange, I know—
But Jack and I both saw one
A little time ago!

Out in the sunny orchard,
We lay upon the grass
And watched far up above us,
The baby cloudlets pass.

The birds were singing carols,
The flowers were bright and gay,
And darling yellow butterflies
Flew round, as if in play.

And then the little breezes
That wander to and fro,
Just shook our big old pear-tree
And covered us with snow!

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 303.)

ALL the children were tired, for their day had been a hard one in many ways. It is tiring to look for anything when you are fortunate enough to find it, but infinitely more so when all your labour meets with no

success. No one was down till it was time for breakfast. Then it was found that Raymond's bicycle had a puncture in the front tyre, and the boys set themselves to mend it, while the girls went out to do some errands in the village for Aunt Eliza.

Whilst the work of mending the puncture was in progress Jim had occasion to enter the house for something that was required, and was rather a long time gone. When he at last returned to the Lodge where the other two were awaiting him, his face showed that he had something rather exciting to tell.

'I say, what do you think?' he began, as soon as he was inside the lodge; 'that chap with the light up by the silver birch last night——' he paused here.

'What about him?' asked Raymond.

'Well, he is here at this moment, in the surgery. He is the new dispenser Father engaged a week ago. He was due to arrive to-day. He lodges at Mrs. Bedford's, Thompson told us just a moment ago.'

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was a moment's silence after Jim had made his startling announcement. It was certainly a strange coincidence, and all three of the boys wondered what it could mean.

'Are you certain that you are right, that it is the same man?' asked Raymond, speaking first.

'Certain as I am that it is you standing there,' said Jim with the deepest conviction. 'There is no doubt at all but that is the same man as we saw last night. You know we got a good sight of him as we rode past, and there is something about his face that one would not forget in a hurry.'

'Well, it is queer, and no mistake. I wonder what he was doing there by the tree where you found that message in the morning,' said Stanley. 'It scarcely seems possible that he went there for nothing. It is not easy to get into the grounds, and there are enough notice-boards about to frighten any one off who had not very important reasons for going there. He must have had some object, and seeing that we found that paper in the tree it looks as if he went there for that.'

'Yes; putting two and two together, it does,' agreed Raymond. 'I wonder if Dr. Railton knows anything about the man.'

'I don't think he does. He said the other day that he had engaged a new dispenser, and that he would come this morning. The other one left last night. He is going to Canada to be with a brother, and Father had to get a new man from somewhere. He said that this one was a foreigner, but that his references were all right.'

'They are usually,' said Raymond with a suggestion of sarcasm in his tone. 'But for all that there is something not quite O.K. about the gentleman, judging by what we have seen. What do you think?'

'He is lodging with Mrs. Bedford, did you say?' asked Stanley a little later on, when they were getting the bicycle tyre once more on to the rim.

'Yes; so Thompson said. She is a decent old body. I wonder what she thinks of him. It wouldn't be half a bad idea to go and have a chat with her.'

'If you could do it without seeming to want to know anything. But it won't do to look as though we suspected something,' said Raymond, preparing to inflate the tyre once more.

'No, you have to go carefully in matters like these,

but I think I can work it,' said Stanley. 'I know; Father will perhaps want some medicine taken to her, and I'll offer to go with it. Then perhaps we shall hear something.'

With this purpose in view Stanley went off in search of his father, whom he found ready to start on his rounds.

'Why, yes; there is some medicine to go. Ask Herr Scharf to give it to you. He is in the surgery. And if any of you would like to come with me, you can. I am going a good distance round this morning.'

'I think Raymond would like to; I'll ask him,' said Stanley, and he went off in search of the two whom he had left in the lodge.

Raymond was quite ready to accompany the Doctor, and so also were the two girls, who at that moment came up the drive, having finished their errands in the village.

Stanley and Jim agreed to stay at home, as they both had 'other fish to fry,' as they expressed it.

'I will take that medicine, Father, as I want to have another look in the wood. It is all on the way,' said Stanley; but Jim did not state the way in which he intended to spend that morning.

When the motor had driven off with the Doctor and his three passengers, Aunt Eliza came to the front door and called to the two boys standing there: 'What are you going to do? Why didn't you go with the doctor?'

'I am going 'o take some medicine to Mrs. Bedford, Auntie,' said Stanley; 'and then I shall have another look in that wood. Somehow I can't give up looking for Jinks.'

'Poor Jinks! Hope deferred maketh the heart sick! But perhaps he will appear yet, unharmed. I trust that he will.'

'Oh, I am not hopeless about him yet,' said Stanley, and then he went off along the path that led from the drive round to the surgery in quest of Herr Scharf, the new dispenser, and a bottle of medicine for Mrs. Bedford.

'Der is no need for you to take him. I myself will go that way in a little while,' protested the man, in queer broken English, when Stanley asked him for the medicine.

'Well, I am going that way now, and perhaps she is wanting it. There is no need for her to be kept waiting,' he replied, for he did not intend to be done out of his conversation with the new dispenser's landlady.

'Ver well, I will get eet,' said the man; and referring to a book he began to make up the mixture. He worked swiftly, as one who was used to the work, and meanwhile Stanley noticed that he evidently bit his finger nails, that he had a massive gold watch-chain, and that there was a strange look in his eyes, as though he were thinking all the time of something else, and not of his work at all.

'Still, it is to be hoped that he does think of what he is doing,' thought the boy, 'or there will be trouble presently. But there is no doubt about his being the man whom we saw in the lane last night. I wonder what it can mean?'

But wondering would not answer that question, and he made haste to get his bicycle, and was riding off down the drive with the medicine in the pocket of his coat, when he saw Jim, and called to him.

'I say, come here,' he said, dismounting.

'What's up?' asked the other, as he came near enough to be heard.

'That's what I want to know. What are you going to do this morning?'

'I? Oh, I am going to have a shot at finding out what that message means. I'm sure it is not very hard, and I'll get to the bottom of it if I can before the others come back. I have got one or two ideas that I want to try.'

'Well, I hope you'll succeed. I would help, only that I want to see Mother Bedford, and this is a good opportunity. But when I get back I'll lend a hand.'

'Right you are. So long.'

Jim turned on his heel and went away in the direction of the house.

The deciphering of the message found in the tree had been on his mind all the morning. He determined to get to the bottom of this part of the mystery, thinking that if they could find out the message that was written on the paper for some one to find in the silver birch, they would understand some of the puzzling things they had encountered. He was certain that the figures represented letters, and that each letter was separated from the next by a full stop, whilst the colons served to divide the words from each other. This was something to go upon, and it only remained for him to discover what letters each number represented.

He went into the house, going to a room right at the top which had originally been their nursery, and was still their playroom, and closing the door after him so that there should be nothing to disturb him. He even took the precaution to wheel an old sofa across the door, as there was no lock on it, so that no one could enter without his consent.

'There, that will do,' he exclaimed with satisfaction, when this arrangement was completed. 'I can settle down in peace now.'

There was a table in the room, and on this Jim spread out several sheets of paper, and also the scrap on which they had copied the message.

For some time he sat studying this thoughtfully, and then, taking one of the sheets of paper he began to write down the letters of the alphabet very large, and very far apart.

This done he paused again, and surveyed his work.

'I think A is one,' he announced to the world at large, but only a mouse who had come out of its hole in the corner nearest the fireplace heard him.

'Yes, A is one, but B is not two, that's certain. And of course it would be too jolly easy if it were. Any baby could make it out at that rate. Four letters in the first word.'

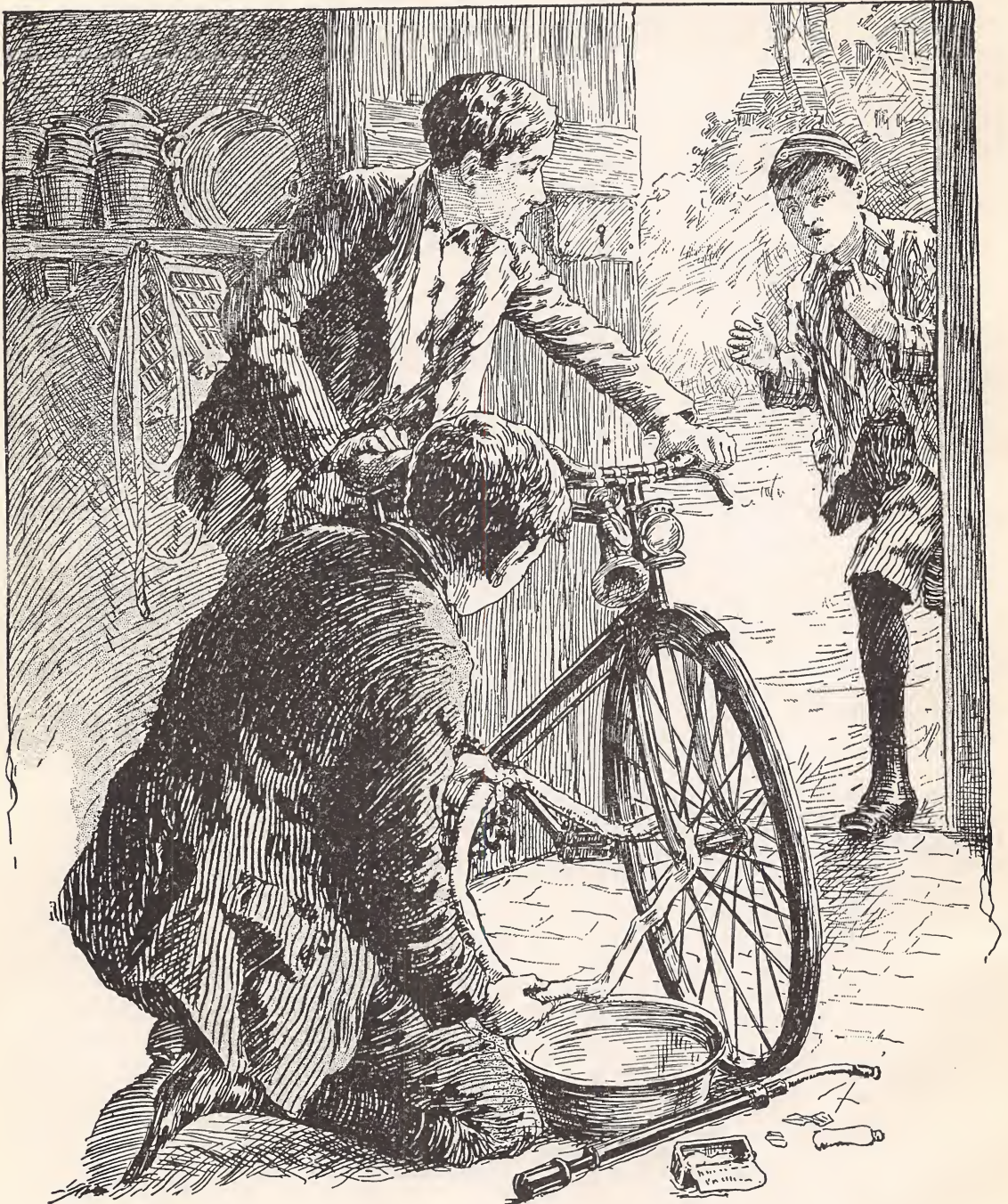
He bent his head and looked more closely at the scrap of paper on which they had copied the message. Then, thinking that it would be easier to decipher if it were more clearly written he copied it out once more on a large sheet of paper, making the figures with great care and leaving a good space between each word.

'There, that is a lot better,' he announced, surveying his work, and the mouse in the corner winked and whisked back into his hole.

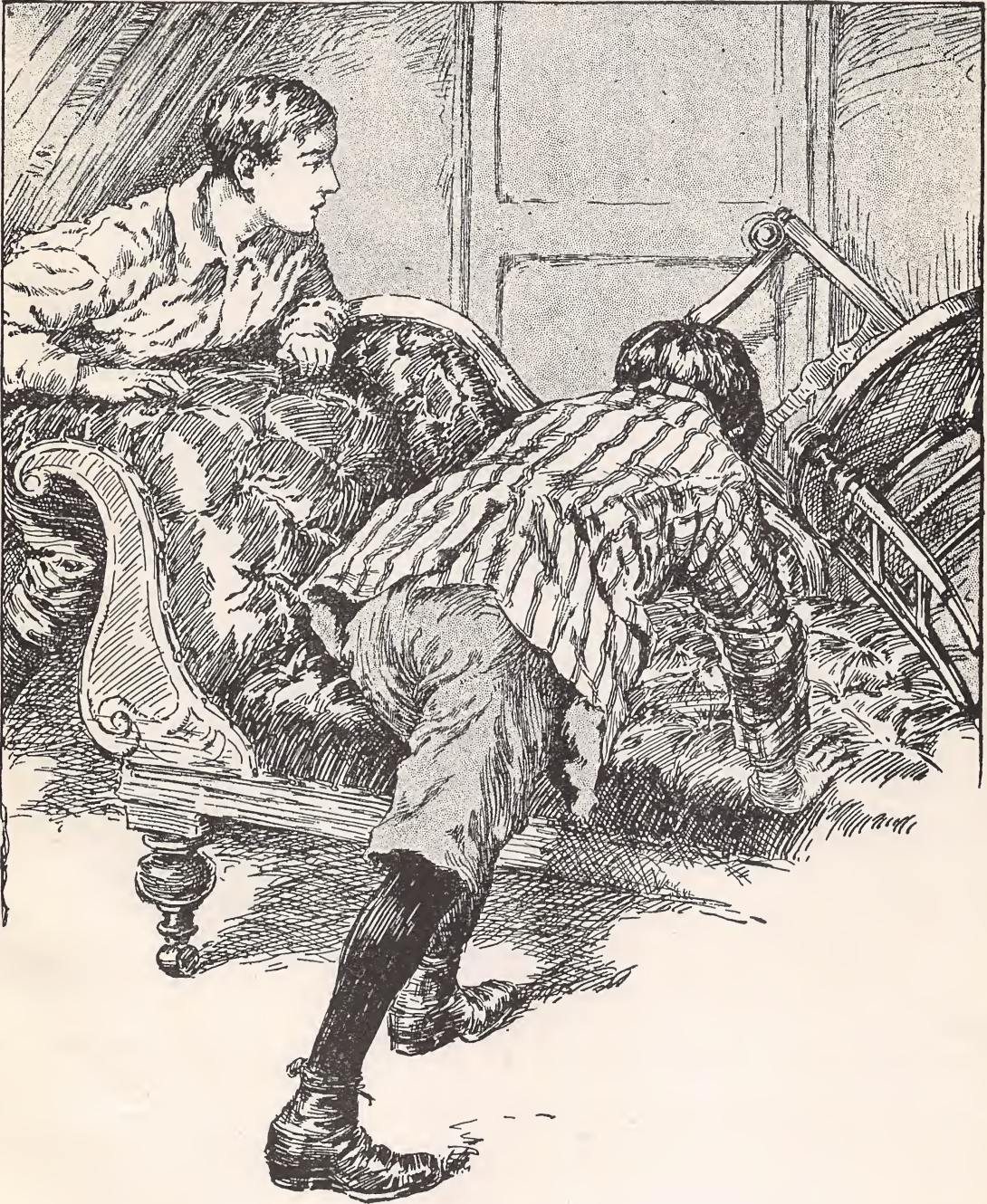
The message that Jim had copied out on the large sheet of paper was this—

25.9.14 : 25.9 : 15.9.10.9 : 3.17.10.5.15 :
14.4 : 2.17.13.15.14 : 12.1.25.9 : 14.17.25.9.

(Continued on page 314.)



"His face showed that he had something rather exciting to tell."



“Stanley helped to arrange the barrier in front of the door.”

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 311.)

JIM sat for long looking at this document. From time to time he scribbled on one of his sheets of paper as an idea occurred to him that seemed to promise a solution of the mystery.

'It is a corker, and no mistake,' he said after repeated trials with letters substituted for figures.

He did not intend to give up on account of failure, however. Each time he had an idea he immediately put it to the test, but failure only served to spur him on to renewed efforts. There was some means of reading this message, and he intended to find it.

'I know, I'll try all the odd numbers and see how far that will take me,' he thought at last. He had not tried this before, thinking it too simple to be likely to prove successful. Now, by dint of substituting the letter A for the figure one, B for three, C for five, he found that the first word became—

M. E. E. 14.

'That's something, anyway. Now what on earth does fourteen stands for?' he asked himself, and just then there came a thudding at the door, and Stanley's voice asking to be let in.

'Hang it all! I suppose I must, though I wanted to have got this done first,' grumbled Jim, as he wheeled the sofa away and admitted his brother.

Stanley helped to arrange the barrier in front of the door once again, asking as he did so, 'Any result?'

'Yes, I think so; come and look at it. I have got part of a word,' said Jim, showing his paper.

'Oh, meet—that's the word. The fourteen stands for T, that's certain.

'So it does! What an ass I was not to have seen that myself,' cried Jim. 'I suppose the fact is I have been stewing over it so long that I have got into a fog.'

'No wonder. I see all the first letters in the alphabet are represented by the odd numbers. The question is, how many letters are odd numbers used for?'

'Yes, that is the point,' said Jim.

Jim was not sorry after all that Stanley had come to his aid, though he had rather desired to solve the riddle unaided. But two heads are usually better than one, and his own particular head was aching with the strain that he had put it to.

'Well, the best way is to try half-and-half first,' said Stanley; 'the first thirteen letters are odd numbers, the second thirteen are even numbers, beginning at two.'

They wrote the alphabet out in this manner, and then applied the result to the message. To their joy it proved correct, and they were able to read what was written there. The message was simply, 'Meet me here birch to-night same time.'

'That's it, without a doubt,' cried Jim in delight. 'The question is, why was that message put in the tree, and what has it got to do with Father's new dispenser?'

CHAPTER VII.

STANLEY had no answer ready for Jim's question. It was impossible to tell why the message had been put in the tree, or what it had to do with their father's new dispenser.

'It is rum, decidedly rum,' said Jim at last, after they

had discussed the matter for some time. 'I really cannot see any daylight at all in the whole business.'

'No, let's see just how much we know,' said Stanley. 'First, we have discovered that a man who we suppose is a servant of Mr. Haverford's is holding communication with some one living outside Dene Manor. We saw this person go to the silver birch and leave a message there. We found and copied that message, and discover that it is telling some person to meet some one else there to-night at the usual time. That must have been last night, since the message says "To-day" and was written yesterday. Then, later on we have the luck to notice a light moving to and fro there beside the tree, and see a man come away from that place, and this man turns out to be Father's new dispenser, who is a foreigner.'

'That's the lot,' agreed Jim, as his brother ended this recital.

'Well, it is not quite the lot. I have been to Mrs. Bedford's, you know.'

'Oh, I had forgotten. What did you get out of her? Anything?'

'Not much, but so far as it went it was useful. I gave her her medicine and then she said, "Your father has got a new dispenser; I have him for a lodger." I did not say much, because that is the best way to get things out of her. In a moment she went on, "He seems a nice gentleman, though he can't talk English very well, and he is always studying." I said, "What does he study?" and she told me that he was always reading old books, very musty, dusty sort of books, and drawing a lot of things that looked like maps.'

'What is that for, I wonder?' mused Jim. 'I don't wonder at his reading; there is not much else for him to do in a place like this when he is not at work; but why should he be drawing plans?'

'And Mrs. Bedford said that he did a lot of sums, too,' added Stanley. 'I am not quite sure what she meant by that, but it looks as though he were making some calculations about the things that he draws plans of.'

'I don't know about that. Remember this message.'

'Oh, you mean that his sums are just messages that he is writing? Well, I am not sure, but of course that may be it. But in any case we may as well keep an eye on him, as there will perhaps be something to show in what way he is connected with that servant of Mr. Haverford's. I think I can hear the motor, though. We may as well go down and find the others.'

They wheeled the sofa back into its corner, and putting the papers with the key to the cypher away in an old desk of which Stanley had the key, they went downstairs.

The Doctor had returned, and the two girls and Raymond were asking for Jim and Stanley.

'Is there any news of Jinks?' inquired Joan, when they met.

'No, I'm sorry to say there is not,' said Stanley. 'I had another look in the wood where we searched yesterday, but I did not see any sign of him.'

'We have asked a lot of people,' said Norah; 'but no one has seen him. It is queer, isn't it?'

'The only person who seems to have seen him is Mrs. Bedford's son. I think it would be a good plan to ride over to Grangely and find him this evening,' said Jim, after a pause. 'He will be at home then, and he may be able to tell us a little.'

'Yes, that sounds a good idea,' agreed Stanley and Raymond, whilst the two girls asked if they might come too.

'It is rather a long ride, quite six and a half miles each way,' said Stanley. 'I don't know that you could manage it, but come if you like.'

'Thirteen miles is not much,' said Norah, who was as good a rider as her brother, or who thought she was, though he was of course stronger.

'It is not so much the distance, as the road. It is tremendously hilly,' said Dr. Railton, who had at that moment come up to where they were standing, and had chanced to hear the last few words.

'Yes, Father; that's just it,' said Stanley; 'that road is a regular switchback.'

'I don't think either of us would mind that,' said Joan; 'but now I remember that I have promised to take you to Molly Fortescue's this afternoon. She is rather lonely, for she has no brothers or sisters. She has lessons with me, you know.'

'I remember, you told me about it yesterday, only I had forgotten,' said Norah. 'That settles it then. The boys will have to go alone.'

'We have not been idle whilst you have been out this morning,' said Jim. 'There's just time before dinner is ready. Come up to the playroom and I will show you something.'

The three who were not in the secret followed him upstairs wondering not a little what it was that he had to show them. Stanley came too, and unlocked the old desk in which they had put the papers.

'Now, see what you can make of it,' said Jim, putting the cypher message and the key to it on the table before Raymond and the two girls. They set to work and soon deciphered the message.

'How on earth did you find it out?' asked Raymond after a careful survey of the key.

'Well, it was rather a corker,' said Jim; 'but I stuck at it, and then before I had quite got hold of it, Stan came in and he saw what I did not, so between us we got the whole of it.'

'That's a good morning's work,' said Raymond, and then Stanley told them what Mrs Bedford had told him that morning about her lodger. 'Oh, and there is something else,' he added. 'I didn't tell you, Jim, for I had forgotten it till this moment. It seems that he is out late at night, walking, he tells her; but from what we have seen I think we know what sort of walking it is and where it takes him.'

'The message said at the usual time,' said Norah, 'I wonder if that was the usual time, when you saw him.'

'I don't think so. You see, he had only gone then to get the message. I think that the meeting time must be later than that. If it is something shady that he is up to it is probable that he would wait till midnight or after for that meeting, when there would be no one about.'

'Yes, I think so too,' said Raymond, and the gong sounding at that moment they all had to hurry off downstairs.

The afternoon was spent in playing tennis, for there was a good court at the Grange and all the party were keen players. As they played, Aunt Eliza sat in the little summer-house, working, and from time to time criticising the game.

(Continued on page 327.)

THE STORM.

THE clouds have chased the sun away,
The happy sky is dark and grey,
And in the fields and in the town
The rain, the rain, is falling down.

Come, let us stand in shelter warm
To watch the wild and noisy storm.
See how the tree-tops bend on high,
As each loud gust goes roaring by.

What does it say—each angry gust?
It says: 'Bend down! You must, you must!
No sunbeam soft can reach your bough,
For cloud and wind are masters now.'

Yet, look! I see a speck of blue:
The sun, the sun is peeping through!
And every leaf shows bright and plain,
With tiny sparks of shining rain.

JOHN LEA.

ACROSS THE WATER.

IX.—BRIDGES IN HISTORY.

IF we turn back the pages of history, we find bridges mentioned again and again, for many important events have happened upon them ever since the famous fight which took place on the Sublician Bridge at Rome, 'in the brave days of old.'

We all know the story of how Horatius and his two companions held the whole Etruscan army at bay, and saved the city, while the wooden bridge was being hurriedly cut away behind them, and most of us have learnt by heart the thrilling verses, which tell how, at last, Herminius and Lartius fled back, over the creaking timbers, while Horatius stayed, to fight alone and guard their escape.

When the bridge fell, Macaulay tells us, the hero found himself stranded on the further side, but, nothing daunted, he plunged into the swift-flowing Tiber and swam safely to shore, while his fellow-citizens looked on with breathless admiration, and 'Even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear a cheer.'

Later on in Roman history a rather similar incident occurred upon the same spot, when Caius, escaping from his enemies, fled across the Sublician Bridge, which was guarded meanwhile by two of his friends. He hid for a time in the thickets of the Aventine, but a price was set on his life by the Roman nobles, who offered a reward to any one who would bring them his head. The reward, it was stated, should be the weight of the head itself in gold; and when, at last, the young man was discovered by a Greek slave, his head was cut off and filled with metal, in order that the value of the reward might be enhanced.

The Sublician Bridge, of which few traces can now be seen, was situated at the foot of the Aventine, and for many centuries was built of wood, in memory of the brave deed of Horatius. Later, however, a stone bridge was erected on the same spot.

There are many interesting bridges in Italy, especially in Venice, which, being a city of canals, is also a city of bridges.

The Bridge of Sighs, which connects the Doge's Palace with the Prison, is certainly one of the most

famous bridges in the world; and pictures and photographs have made us all familiar with the high-covered arch which connects the two buildings across a narrow canal. It is said to have received its melancholy name because condemned prisoners were taken across it on their way to the gloomy dungeons where their captivity was to be spent.

Another beautiful old bridge in Venice is the Rialto, which spans the Grand Canal with one great marble arch, and which for many centuries has been one of the principal thoroughfares and meeting-places of Venice.

In the Middle Ages bridges were often considered as neutral ground, and on them treaties were signed and meetings between enemies took place. One such meeting in 1419 ended in a terrible tragedy, and the story of what occurred is one of the most terrible in history.

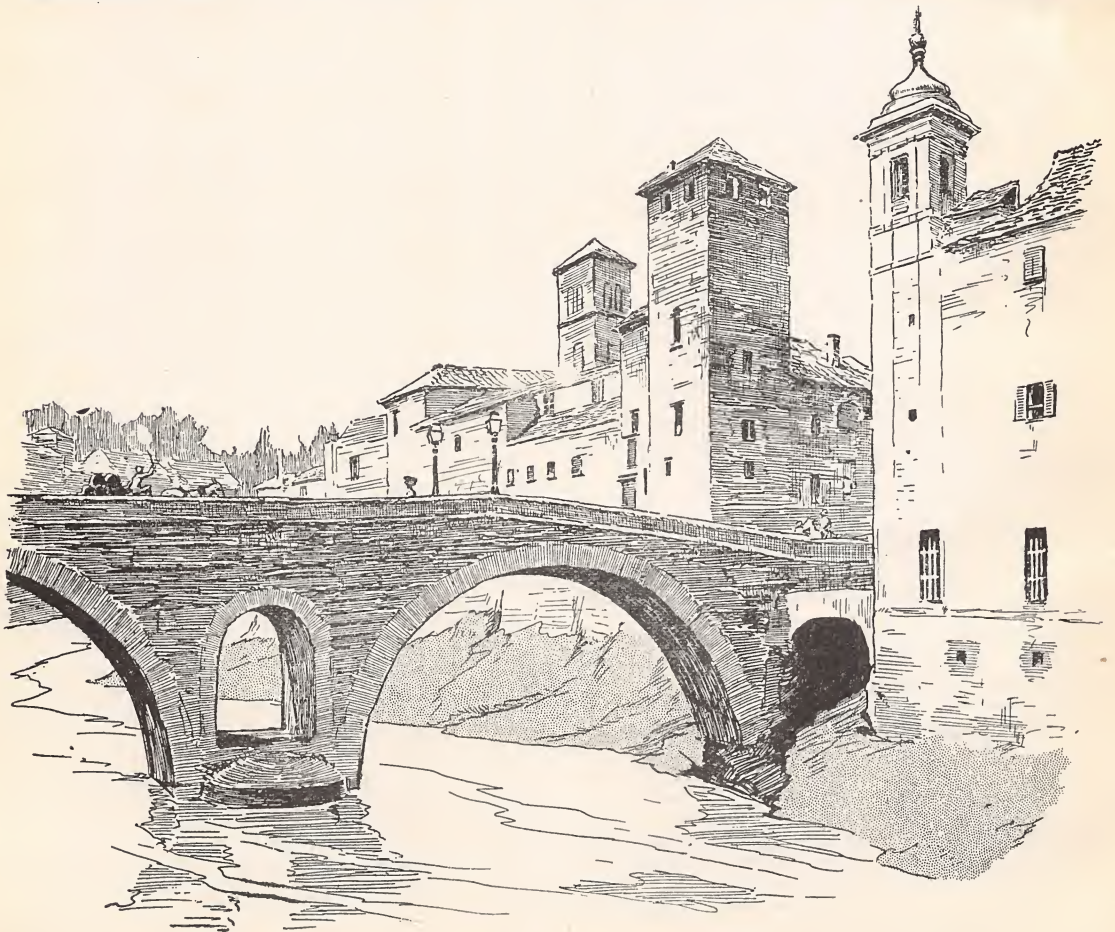
For many years there had been bitter enmity between the two great Houses of Orleans and Burgundy, and many murders and massacres had been committed by the followers of each party, but at last an interview was arranged between the Duke of Burgundy and the Dauphin of France, who belonged to the Orleanist faction. The meeting was to take place upon the bridge at Montereau-sur-Yonne, and great precautions were

taken, for each side distrusted the other, and suspected treachery. It was, indeed, hardly surprising that this should be the case, for only a few years before Burgundy had caused the Duke of Orleans to be murdered in the streets of Paris, and he knew quite well that the friends of the dead man longed to be revenged.

However, the Dauphin promised, 'on the honour of a prince,' that he would keep faith with his enemy, and Burgundy, trusting to this promise, in spite of repeated warnings, went with his followers to Montereau. The bridge was found to be securely barricaded, and, when he advanced on to it, with only a few companions, the barrier was shut and barred behind him.

'You have pledged your honour for my safety, but do you say true?' Burgundy said to Tannegui de Chastel, one of the Orleanist leaders, who had been sent by the Dauphin to escort the Duke across the bridge, and, as the assurances were repeated, he went forward to a second barrier, where the young prince was awaiting his arrival.

When the meeting-place was reached, Burgundy knelt down, cap in hand, to greet the Dauphin, and, at this moment he was stabbed in the back and murdered. Then soldiers, who had been concealed on the river



A Bridge on the Tiber, Rome.



THE SNAKE CHARMER



The Rialto Bridge, Venice.

bank, rushed forward, and the followers of the Duke met with the same fate as their leader.

Rather more than fifty years later, another such meeting took place upon a bridge in France, when Edward IV. of England had an interview with the king, Louis XI., in order that a treaty between the two countries of France and England might be signed.

On this occasion those who arranged the ceremony doubtless had the tragedy of Montreuil in their minds, for a barrier was placed across the bridge, and through a grating in this the two monarchs conversed, touched each other's hands, and swore to observe the terms of the treaty.

Historians tell us that at this strange interview Edward was attired in cloth of gold, and that in his cap he wore a large Fleur-de-Lys made of precious stones. No doubt this ornament was intended to remind Louis that the English sovereign claimed the title of King of France, and considered he had a right to wear the emblems of royalty.

We leave France now, and come nearer home, to find that London Bridge itself has many historical associations, some of them of great antiquity, for in the chronicles of William of Malmesbury we read how, in the year 994, the Danes invaded England, sailed up the Thames and fought a fierce battle at London Bridge.

In 1212 there was a terrible fire in Southwark, and

the Londoners, in their eagerness to see what was happening, crowded on to the bridge. A strong wind was blowing, and soon the bridge itself caught fire at both ends. The rash sightseers were imprisoned between two conflagrations, and it is said more than three thousand perished in the flames or threw themselves into the river and were drowned.

More than a hundred years later another disaster occurred on London Bridge, when a huge crowd had assembled to see the entry into the City of Isabel, the child-bride of Richard II. So great was the throng that nine persons were crushed to death, and many others seriously injured.

This was not the only great procession that passed into London over the famous old bridge, for it saw the bridal pageant of many a queen and princess, the triumphant home-coming of Henry V. after his campaign in France, and, only a few years later, the wonderful funeral of the same monarch, when the King of Scotland was chief mourner, and when, as old writers tell us, all London seemed to follow the bier of the hero of Agincourt.

In 1450 Jack Cade and his rebels marched against London and fought a battle with the citizens on the bridge; and on February 3rd, 1553, the gates were shut and the drawbridge cut in order to defend the city against Sir Thomas Wyatt and his men of Kent.

THE QUEEREST BIRD IN ALL AMERICA.

MANY are the queer birds in America, in all the thirteen million square miles from Hudson's Bay away south to Cape Horn. But nothing that is yet known resembles the Guacharo of Colombia, which, in addition to its extraordinary appearance, is the only night-bird, as yet found, feeding on seeds, fruits, and corn.

This remarkable bird has given a world-fame among ornithologists to the valley of Caripe, where the Caripe River rises, and many thousands of these nocturnal creatures live in a gigantic cavern.

The Guacharo, which is of the size of our average hen, has the mouth of the goatsuckers—a name common to various species of night-birds—but it has the bearing of those vultures whose crooked beak is surrounded with stiff silky hairs. It differs from the goatsuckers in having a strong and very raucous note, like the crow's; a double tooth in its beak with which to crack its food; and by its feet being without the thin skin that usually joins the claws.

The eyes of the Guacharo, which are blue, are injured by the light of day, and it leaves the cavern only at nightfall, especially when the moon shines, to feed on all kinds of hard and soft fruits, which furnish, under the singular name of 'Guacharo seed,' a very celebrated native remedy against fevers.

The cavern at its mouth is eighty feet broad and seventy feet high, but becomes smaller as it runs back into the Sierra del Guacharo, and has innumerable passages of unknown length and of great height.

The Indians find the nests of these birds by fixing blazing torches to the end of long poles. The nests are up fifty or sixty feet high in holes in the shape of funnels, with which the sides and roof of the cavern are pierced like a sieve.

It is difficult to give an idea of the horrible tumult made by the thousands of these vulture-like birds in the dark parts of the Cueva (or cave) as they shriek forth their shrill and piercing cries while swooping about in the torchlight, that reveals their plumage, which is of a dark bluish-grey, streaked with black, large white blotches bordered with black specking the head, the wings, and tail. The spread of the wings being three feet and a half, a Guacharo can blind an Indian by dashing against him as he climbs the palm-trunks to reach the nests in the roof of the cavern.

Once a year the natives enter the Cueva del Guacharo, near midsummer, armed with poles, and destroy the greater part of the nests toward the mouth of the caves. Thousands of the birds are killed for the sake of their fat, which is melted down into a very fine kind of oil, quite clear, without any odour, and so pure that it can be kept for more than a year without any risk of it becoming rancid. This oil, the natives, Indians, and Spanish Colombians alike, look upon as a great rarity.

The race of the Guacharos would have long ago become extinct had not several circumstances contributed to its preservation. The natives, kept back by their superstitious ideas, have not the courage to penetrate far into the cavern, believing that the ghosts of their ancestors hide in the deep and unknown recesses. Also, birds of the same species nest in the adjoining cuevas, which are too narrow and dangerous to be accessible to any marauders.

TRUANTS.

A LITTLE white house in a garden stood,
And green were its shutters of painted wood;
Wide were its windows, and open its door,
And brothers and sisters it held—just four.
Just two little girls and two little boys:
Trees were their playmates, and flowers their toys;
They took it in turns to work and to play,
Some keeping house, and some holiday.
'The Winds,' their name, and the cottage, their nest;
The 'North' and the 'South,' the 'East' and the
'West.'

* * * * *

Now two little people wandered one day
Through a broken fence, down the broad highway,
Where the little white house in its garden stood,
And they peeped through the doorway, as children
would.

Mary peeped first. 'Jack, it's empty!' cried she.
'No,' whistled the North Wind, 'it's full—of me!
I'm off for a frolic, perhaps you'll come too?'
And they answered together, 'Suppose we do.'
Then off they sped, in and out, up and down,
Till the air was clouded with thistledown,
Till heads of tall poppies were emptied of seeds,
And the garden a desert of tangled weeds;
Then they halted, breathless, the tired three,
At the root of a gnarled old apple-tree.
The North Wind rose, and he shook a branch,
And down there tumbled an avalanche
Of big rosy apples for Mary and Jack—
Their skins were red and their pips were black;
The fruit was as ripe as ripe could be
That the North Wind shook from the apple-tree.
They filled their pockets, and home they sped;
'Where have you been to?' Nursie said.
'To visit the North Wind,' Jack replied,
'In a dear little house, and we've been inside:
We've peeped in his attic, and searched in his sheds,
And romped in his garden, all over the beds.
We've eaten his apples, and played Hide-and-seek,
We shall call on the other three Winds next week.'
But Nurse only answered, 'You mustn't tell fibs;
Tea's on the table; come, put on your bibs.'

LILIAN HOLMES.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 307.)

DICK'S spirits had plenty of time to cool, for they saw no more of Omar for three days. Their food was now brought by a negro, who regarded them with a good-tempered grin, showed no ill-will towards them, even considering their convenience in the way one treats tame cattle. But they looked impatiently for Omar, and he did not come.

The guard was changed twice a day, but one man stood watch all through the night, and except that the butt of his spear rattled on the ground now and again, he might have been a statue, so still he stood. Splendidly built

men these dervish soldiers: that is to say, the veterans—the seasoned warriors of the regular army—many of fine physique and courage unsurpassable, with the fine features and dignified carriage of the Arab, blended with the breadth and muscle of the negro. These were the men who had defeated the Egyptian army, and carried all before them in many a fight, and were still confident of sweeping the foreigner and the time-server from Egypt. They held themselves proudly and looked with some contempt upon another section drawn from the lower grades of the peasant class. The force that had captured the two boys were mainly of the latter class, ill-disciplined and of a lower physical type, but with some of the veterans among them. The difference of the two classes was easily seen in their carriage and demeanour. The men who lay encamped around the Emir's tent and from whom the body-guard and sentries were drawn, were physically as fine soldiers as can be found in Europe, and such were the men who took up their position in front of the shelter where Dick and Harry were confined.

The boys' spirits were at a very low ebb again at the non-appearance of Omar, when on the second night after his visit they were surprised by a spear being thrust through the brushwood which formed the back of their shelter; to the spear was attached a piece of paper with writing on it. They examined it in the light of the moon, and found these words written in English, 'Tomorrow night between moonset and sunrise.' They were greatly excited. The message was plain; after the moon set there would be three or four hours of darkness before the sun rose—that was the time appointed for their escape, but the puzzle was, how did Omar write this message in English, of which he did not know a single word? It was perfectly certain that he could not have written it. Then who did? They were not long, however, in arriving at a solution. Omar must have got into communication with Uncle Charlie. Somewhere in the neighbourhood Uncle Charlie must be in hiding, very likely with a small force of British soldiers, perhaps too small to take the dervish position, or it might be they wished to effect the rescue of the boys before opening fire on the dervishes, and thus endangering the lives of the prisoners. Their hearts thumped at the thought of it. Omar was acting for Uncle Charlie in this, and had devised a plan of getting them away under cover of the darkness, and this message was Uncle Charlie's writing. They pored over the scrap of paper in the beam of moonlight that came through the entrance of the hut. There was no signature, no initials; it was a piece torn from the back of an envelope, just one of the triangular folds of an ordinary white envelope. The writing was not strikingly like that of Uncle Charlie, but who could tell in what cramped position it might have been written? Possibly it might be the writing of the officer accompanying him.

'At any rate,' said Dick, 'here it is. You see Uncle has had plenty of time to get back from Assuan, whatever delays there may have been.'

CHAPTER XX.

To pass the tedious day and prepare themselves for a night of watching, the boys had tried to sleep the afternoon away, but with very poor success. Now it was night, and they watched the slow progress of the moon in the southern sky.

'I can't stand it any longer,' whispered Harry. 'I've looked at the moon till I'm quite dazed. If I stare any longer I shall be moon-struck or hypnotised, or something. I'm as nervous as a cat. Let us take it in turns and sleep an hour each, and forget it.'

'Right,' agreed Dick. 'You take first turn. I'll wake you when the moon is over that tent to the left.'

Harry lay back in his sand-bed, turned his face from the moonlight, and tried to sleep. The Man of Mystery was already soundly sleeping, curled up in his corner. The sentry outside took one turn up and down, dropped the butt of his spear on the ground, and stood motionless as the Sphinx again, and Dick sat with his knees up, trying not to think. When the moon stood over the tent he roused Harry, who it appeared had just that moment dozed off. Dick, more fortunate, had a good sleep and seemed in no disposition to awake when Harry nudged him. This time Harry fared better, and so they went on till the moon was getting very low in the west; then they both sat up and awaited its disappearance.

'What bothers me is this,' whispered Dick: 'how is Omar going to manage that sentry on guard?'

'Perhaps he goes off duty at that time,' Harry replied in the same tone.

'That's not at all likely,' said Dick.

'Perhaps he will kill him,' he added huskily. 'There's no knowing what these dervishes will do: they don't think anything of human life.'

Dick almost fancied he could see in the declining light a stealthy figure creep from the shadows—creep up to the sentinel who stood with his back turned to the hut like a statue in the silent night—creep with uplifted arm.

Dick rubbed his eyes. The moon was dipping in a low hazy bank at the horizon, they could no longer see it from the shelter, but they felt it was going by the gathering gloom. It was gone. The sentry still stood immovable with his back to the hut—breathlessly they listened for the faintest footfall of Omar. No, it was not yet dark enough. The night deepened—it was dark. The boys sat with heads forward and lips parted, listening: the silence seemed to sing in their ears, listening—listening.

The sentry wheeled round and thrust his face into the hut.

'Abdulla!' they both exclaimed in one breath.

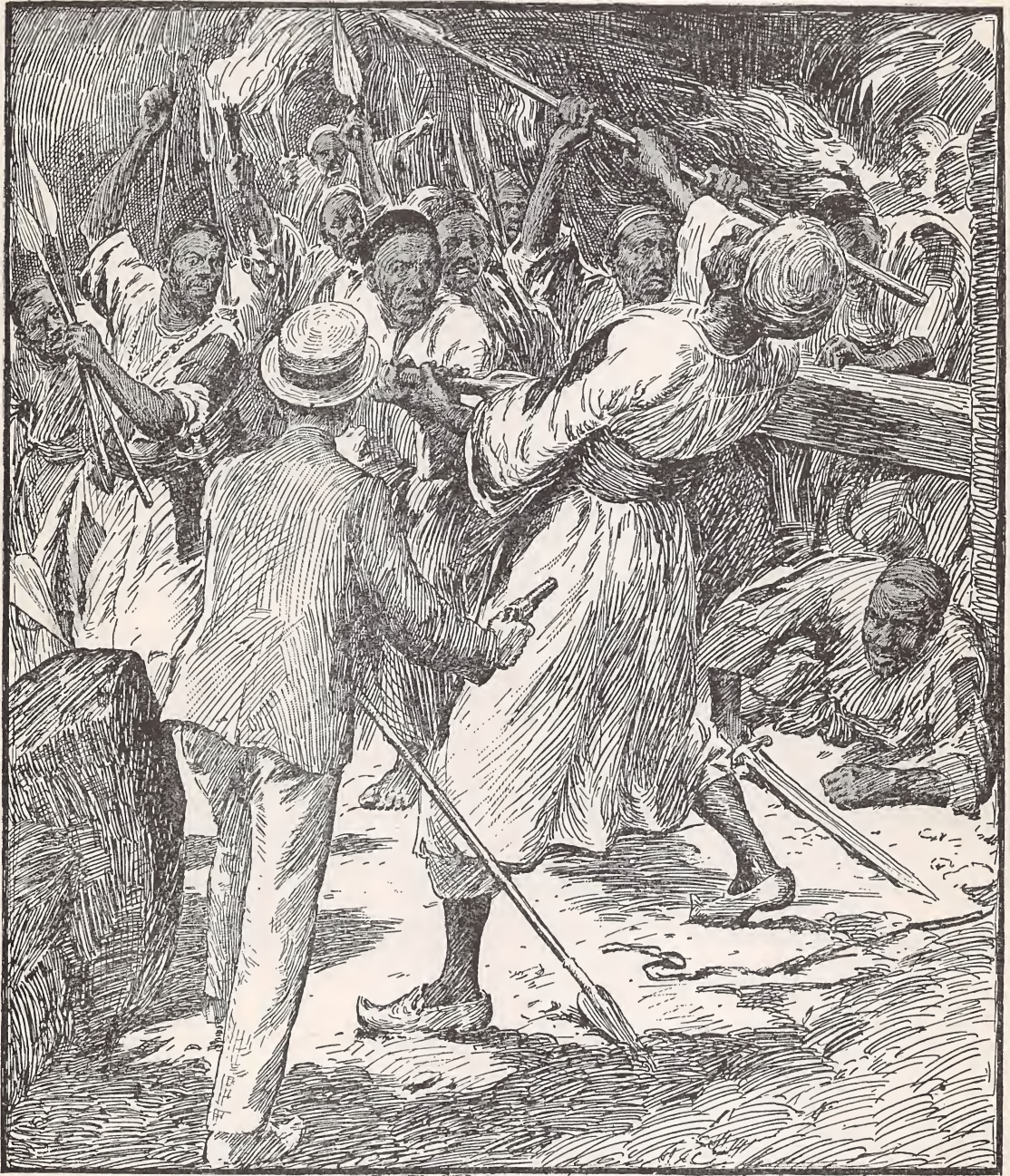
It was no time for explanations. 'Is the Fakir awake?' said Abdulla. 'Come.'

He had taken the dark goats' hair blankets from the roof of the shelter and told the prisoners to cover their white garments with them and crawl across the open space and past the line of tents which lay between them and the declivity which led toward the well. He walked upright and led the way. All was quiet. The dervishes lay in the deep sleep that comes toward the morn. There was a movement in one of the huts as they passed, but all was still again, and they crept on; then a strange noise startled them, and they were about to spring to their feet and run. It was only the horses cropping the harbage, their tethers dragging in the low bushes: they could see their dim outlines now. One whinnied. They crept past them and down the slope: now their hands felt the damp earth—they were at the well.

(Continued on page 322.)



"The sentry thrust his face into the nut."



“The dervishes swept forward with triumphant shouts.”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 319.)

ABDULLA signed to them to rise, and without a word led the way down the ravine among rocks and over grassy patches. Now they went swiftly, Abdulla dodging among the boulders and avoiding the brushwood for fear of the snapping of a twig. There was a light moving in the camp, then a shout answered by another. 'The camp is roused,' he said, 'but they find not so soon the tracks: we have the start ten minutes.' More rapidly onward sped the fugitives, regardless now of crackling sticks and dislodged stones, turning sharply among boulders and darting across open spaces. They were nearing the mouth of the ravine, and the ground was rougher and more difficult, and in places huge masses of stone blocked the way. The noise and commotion in the camp increased, a score of torches flitted about, and sharp orders rang out amid a rumble of voices: the dervishes were on their track and moving down the slope to the well, and now boomed the Ombeyeh—the terrible war-trumpet made from a hollow elephant's tusk. The boys were almost out of breath as they scrambled over the piled rocks. Abdulla came to a standstill and faced round. 'Rest!' he said, raising his hand. The 'Man of Mystery' had kept the pace with apparent ease and no excitement, but stumbled now and again over the boulders as if his sight was not good in the gloom. Abdulla looked closely into the faces of the boys, and appeared satisfied with what he saw.

'Is it well?' he said. 'Are you calm? Then listen what I say.' He now spoke very deliberately.

'Englis boy Dick, listen—we make now the hiding-place in the throne of the idol. Remember you the opening—the ball on the hawk's head? Press it down. If we parted—remember it well. At the end of the ravine turn south, one mile is the Rock Temple: inside the hiding-place is there a ring in the wall, have you seen? Pull the ring down—down—so—not out. In the same way on the inside it closes—follow then the passage. You well understand? Be calm, Englis boy Dick. Allah is above all.' He then spoke in Arabic to the Man of Mystery, evidently repeating the directions. 'Now, quick but calm,' he added, as he led the way again.

During the delay the sounds of pursuit had drawn much nearer, the war-trumpet still boomed. The dervishes were coming down the bed of the stream and spreading up the sides of the gorge, excited voices echoed among the rocks, and the report of a gun. The fugitives were now at the mouth of the ravine, great rocks were piled two-thirds across its breadth, leaving only a sufficient passage for three men abreast. Dick's heart sank within him when he saw an armed dervish posted in the gap. Abdulla bounded on—straight for the opening—straight for the dark figure of the sentinel leaning on his spear, his head outstretched toward them. Dick set his teeth and fingered the revolver in his pocket, resolved that at any cost he would not be taken again.

The dervish's attitude was not threatening; he had sighted the figures hurrying in his direction, and raised his arm as if to signal them. Two paces more and they saw that it was Omar. He stretched out his arm to

indicate that the way to freedom lay open before them. Suddenly his attitude changed to a threatening one, as he noted the figure of the 'Man of Mystery' in the group, and he turned on Abdulla with angry expressions of reproach, his words flew fast and hissing, then ran up the scale of anger and exploded in a note—one word, that seemed to embody everything of hate and fury. Throwing his body back he raised his spear to drive it through the body of Abdulla, who now stood on the defensive to turn its point with the shaft of his own.

Dick was appalled at the change that had come over the dervish. In less than five minutes their pursuers would be on them. What could he do? All hope seemed gone: their only friends—their rescuers—would perish by each other's hands, and they with them.

As the spear flew up, he sprang between: he wrenched the amulet—Omar's own gift—from his watch-chain, and held it in the face of the dervish, then hung it on Abdulla's chest, thrusting the few broken chain-links into the neck of his garment. The spear descended, and Omar dropped his head with something like a groan, then, with head still bowed, motioned that the way was open. Dick seized his hand in a fervent grip of gratitude—it was the only way he could express his thanks, and as they passed on Omar's voice rose in a pathetic lament, the meaning of which they never knew.

There was no time for reflection—the enemy was close at their heels. They were under the cliff, stumbling in its deep shadow. The torches had already turned into the open, and they could hear Omar's voice on the other side of the ravine trying to divert the pursuit in that direction.

Abdulla was saying, 'Calm; quick, but calm.'

The 'Man of Mystery' fell, but was on his feet again, a precious half-minute lost—the Rock Temple—thank God, the Rock Temple. They were inside stumbling over the rubbish, but the foremost of the dervishes were in too. The red torchlight lit up the ghostly place, and the shadows of the fugitives ran before them on the ground.

'Quick! in!—the hawk's head—press the ball—I keep them back,' and Abdulla turned, standing on the heap of rubbish that lay at the foot of the throne. The hiding-place was half-open as Selim had left it in his flight, and his stick lay jammed in the crack beneath. Harry was in, but the 'Man of Mystery's' blanket had caught—it was but one instant's blockage. Abdulla had turned and faced the dervishes. Dick turned too, his revolver in his hand. Abdulla glanced sideways one moment at Dick, a calm approving smile on his lips as he said, 'Englis boy Dick has the good heart—God is above all.'

The dervishes swept forward with triumphant shouts; the torchlight flashed and glinted on spears, lit up cruel faces and glittered in fierce eyes; spear clashed against spear—a shot rang out. Two dervishes fell from spear thrust and revolver. Dick fired again, as a big dervish lunged with his spear at Abdulla. A dozen men had wrenched a long beam from the rubbish on the ground, and thrust it into the half-closed hiding-place close on the heels of the 'Man of Mystery'; the beam struck Dick a sideways blow which brought him on his knees. He was up again and firing, but what could it avail that one dropped in the crowd, or that one arm hung useless, or that Abdulla's spear seemed to flash everywhere? The weapon was seized by two pairs of hands, and Dick

saw a great spear-head driven with such force that it went clean through the chest of Abdulla. He saw the point come out at his back behind the uplifted right arm. Almost at the same moment a glancing blow from the heavy shaft of a spear stretched Dick beside him.

The men with the beam had wrenched and levered to force the opening of the hiding-place, and now amid the noise of the tumult echoing in that vaulted place, the writhing lights and shadows thrown by the torches on struggling figures, no one noticed the great Colossus tremble. Gently it swayed, bowed forward, broke at the loins, swept forward like a cataract its hundred tons of stone, and with a horrible roar and a cloud of dust blotted out the scene. Slowly the dust settled down; two or three poor broken wretches on the margin of the crowd crawled out into the open. A torch lay guttering and burning itself out beside the wall. All was silent.

(Continued on page 334.)

FORGET ME NOT.

'FORGET me not,' the flowers say,
When summer days are past,
And the sweet blossom fades away,
And Autumn comes at last.

'Forget me not,' the swallow sings,
After the Summer's prime,
And then wheels out and plumes his wings
To seek a warmer clime.

'Forget me not,' says each kind word
That ever we heard say;
That kindly thought and feeling stirred,
And glad some made the day.

'Forget me not,' repeats our youth,
In accents sweet and dear;
'Remember all the grace and truth
That marked thy childhood's year.'

FRANK ELLIS.

ONLY A STICK.

SYDNEY SMITH, the famous wit, had quite a happy way of making his witticisms convey an instructive lesson. One day he was in conversation with a rather pompous but stupid acquaintance who saw great importance in trifling things.

'Do you see this stick?' the man said. 'It has been all round the world, sir.'

Smith looked at the stick with well-feigned astonishment, as though he expected to find something wonderful in it, and then replied in a tone of disappointment, 'And yet it is only a stick.'

W. A. A.

SOME CHINESE PROVERBS.

EVEN the Emperor has poor relations.
Do good, regardless of consequences.

There is many a good man under a shabby hat.

A man without a smiling face must not open a shop.

A man with a good conscience is not afraid when there is a knock at the door at midnight.

Fear not when men speak evil of you; fear lest you should do evil.

First put yourself right, then others.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

10.—RHYMED CHARADE.

My first in ancient lore
Was heard in music sweet;
Horns had he on his head,
And goat-like were his feet.

My second is a word
Composed of letters two;
And largely is it used
By me as well as you.

My third has wondrous skill
All things in turn to be;
He often makes us laugh,
Though make us cry can he.

My whole at Christmas-time
Is very gay and bright;
And many children go
To see the pretty sight.

E. D.

(Answer on page 355.)

ANSWER TO CHARADE ON PAGE 283.

Pepper-mint.

ACROSS THE WATER.

X.—STRANGE BRIDGES THE WORLD OVER.

ANCIENT bridges and modern bridges, simple bridges and mechanical bridges, suspension bridges, drawbridges, and pontoon bridges; all these have been already described, but there are besides many other curious bridges which cannot be put into any of the foregoing classes. These must have an article to themselves which shall be called 'Strange Bridges all over the World.'

We have seen how in ancient times rivers and gorges were crossed by stepping-stones or by fallen trunks of trees; but there are other bridges still in existence which were used in even earlier days. These are the wonderful natural arches found in the canyons of North America, which, instead of being made by the hands of men, were hollowed by water out of the solid rock. Many of these marvellous bridges are in Colorado, while others are to be seen in Virginia and in Utah.

The Carolyn Bridge is one of the most extraordinary of these great rock arches. It is three hundred and eighty-six feet in length and nearly fifty feet wide. Another, the Edwin or Little Bridge, has a span of one hundred and ninety-four feet, and is so graceful and symmetrical when seen from a distance that it is almost impossible to believe that it is not the work of a skilled engineer; while a third, the Augusta Bridge, in the White Canyon, is even larger than either of these, and crosses a gorge that is no less than two hundred and twenty-two feet in width.

In the neighbourhood of some of these bridges are found ancient rock dwellings and the traces of shrines, which show that they were considered sacred by the natives of the country in prehistoric times. Even now the strange, mysterious arches are looked upon with awe

by the Indians, who say a prayer before venturing on them. One traveller tells us that his Indian guide would not go beneath the great Nonnezoshi Bridge in Colorado, because he could not remember the special prayer ordained for the occasion.

In North Africa a smaller but similar rock bridge can be seen in the ravine of Constantine, in Algeria. This natural arch, however, is not used as a roadway, and the gorge is also spanned by a fine stone bridge. Another famous bridge over a deep ravine can be seen at Ronda, in Spain.

From natural bridges, which are the strongest and most massive in the world, we turn to cane bridges, which are the most flimsy, and we find many of these in the tropical features of India and Central Africa. These delicate structures, which look almost as if a breath of wind would blow them away, are made of woven reeds, and some of them are like long hammocks in shape. They are, however, more durable and solid than they look, and the natives cross them fearlessly on their way from one village to another.

It is not necessary to go as far afield as Central Africa in order to find curious hanging bridges, for one that looks as if it would be quite as dangerous and difficult to cross may be seen in Ireland. This is the rope bridge of Carrick-a-Rede, which swings over a deep chasm, one hundred and eighty feet in width, and joins a small rocky island to the mainland. It is made of ropes, two of which are hung parallel to each other. On these cross-bars of wood are laid, in the same way as the sleepers of a



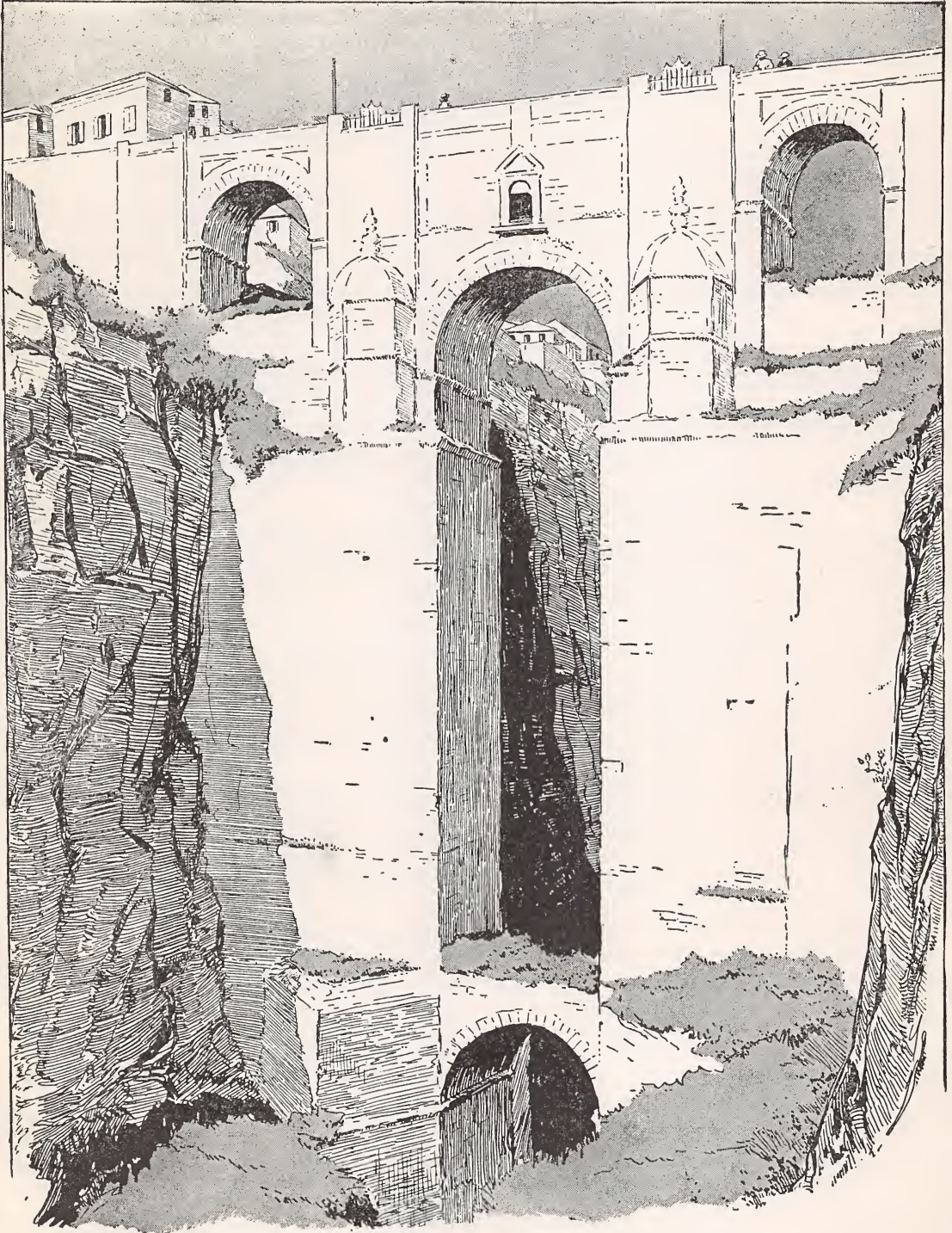
Nonnezoshi Bridge, America.

The world's greatest natural bridge.

(The little figures on the left are men on horseback: this shows the huge size of the arch.)



Cane Bridge—Burma.



Bridge at Ronda, Spain.

railway train, and light planks are fastened lengthwise on them. A third rope is suspended about four feet above the bridge, and this serves as a handrail to support the bold traveller who ventures to cross the frail structure.

This bridge is removed during the winter months, when the fishermen, for whom it is provided, return to the mainland, and the little island is uninhabited.

In contrast to this swinging bridge, which is used only during the summer, we turn to another curious temporary bridge, namely, the railway line over the frozen St. Lawrence, which simply consists of wooden sleepers and lines placed on the ice of the great river, and which, of course, has to be relaid every year.

America is a country of many extraordinary and ingenious bridges, and among others must be noticed the great trestle erections, in which the wooden or iron supports almost entirely fill the deep ravines that the roadways or railway lines cross. A wonderful structure, but of quite another character, is the hanging railway bridge over the deep canyon called the Royal Gorge in Arkansas. In this case, the bridge itself is suspended by rods from great girders, the steep sides of the ravine not allowing other supports to be constructed. This Hanging Bridge is one of the marvels of modern engineering skill and resource.

A bridge that instead of being stationary moves from place to place seems to be almost an impossibility, but there actually is such a thing at St. Malo, in France. It is called the 'Pont Roulant,' and consists of a platform raised upon what look like four slender legs. These legs have wheels attached to them, which slide along rails laid beneath the water of the tidal harbour of St. Malo. The moving bridge is dragged backwards and forwards by means of chains.

One of the strangest of bridges is now unfortunately destroyed, but we read of it in old books. This was the great Rhine bridge at Schaffhausen, in Switzerland, which was more than four hundred feet in length. There was a pier built in the middle of the river, but apparently the huge structure did not rest upon it. We are told that if a man walked across this bridge he felt it swing and quiver beneath his weight, but, at the same time, it was so well balanced that heavy carts and waggons could be driven over it safely.

This wonderful bridge was destroyed by the French in their retreat from Switzerland in 1799.

WRINKLES FOR THE FIFTH.

THE very simplest way to become blind is to look into a firework to see why it does not go off. Readers who prefer to retain the use of their eyesight will find the following hints helpful in avoiding accidents and ensuring the success of the celebrations on bonfire night.

First, as to rockets, the most popular of all fireworks. These should be tied firmly to the stick so that they will balance across one's finger at a point about an inch from the choked part of the case. Stand the stick in a slightly slanting position in a bottle embedded firmly in the ground. If a rocket slants too far from the perpendicular, one of two things may happen: either it will hit the garden wall and come to an untimely end, or it will explore the interior of a neighbour's house—*via* the bedroom window. Be careful to stand as far away as

possible from rockets and all other large fireworks when lighting. Matches are quite unsuitable for this purpose. The best lighters are made by splitting the end of a three-foot bamboo cane and fixing a starlight or port fire in the cleft.

Roman candles can be supported in a variety of ways; if let off singly they may be stuck in a ginger-beer bottle, or into the hole that is usually found in the seat of a garden chair.

But the best way is to fire half a dozen or more at a time, arranging them in a double row and tying the cases to sticks thrust into the ground. If the candles are slightly inclined towards one another the result is a very pretty avenue of fire, the coloured balls meeting in the middle.

If you want a report that will bring all the neighbours to the windows under the impression that the German invasion has arrived, get a maroon rocket. These fireworks rise to a great height, and explode with the noise of a thunderclap.

Maroons also give a good account of themselves in the way of noise. They should be buried in the ground, all but a quarter of the length at the top of the case. When lighting a maroon just touch the fuse with a port-fire, and then retreat to a safe distance. Discretion is the better part of valour when dealing with big fireworks.

A couple of ounces of coloured fire spread on a tray and burned at the end of the garden will be effective by contrast with the other fireworks. If lighted in the original box much of the effect will be lost.

A mine, or Jack-in-the-box, should stand on the top of a wall or some other support well above the ground. In this case a long-handled lighter is absolutely necessary, as you will not have time to climb down again after using a match. The coloured balls and crackers and things that these fireworks throw out are very nice in their place, but rather uncomfortable if they get down one's neck.

Tourbillons are most delightful fireworks, often appropriately named 'fiery aeroplanes.' They require a flat, hard, and smooth surface to start from, such as a tin tray or a paving stone, and should be placed with the planes underneath.

Fire balloons require two or three people to start them. They must be held steady while the lamp—a wad of cotton-wool soaked in methylated spirit—is lighted by means of a match carefully introduced into the mouth at the bottom of the balloon.

Water devils provide capital entertainment, but they are no use in a suburban garden. The firework after lighting must be thrown into a pond or river. Here it will behave in a manner which amply justifies its name, darting to and fro on the surface, and leaving a trail of fire behind it. Ultimately an explosion takes place, accompanied by a brilliant flash of light.

There are probably few fireworks of the cheaper kind more effective than Catherine wheels, or pinwheels, yet they are often charged with fickleness that is not theirs by nature. If fixed so that the wheel can slide along the pin into contact with a wooden fence or post, it is very likely to stick. The pin should be bent very slightly downward, so that the firework will slide away from the wood. Ladies' dress pins are the best to use, because the head is not only quite round, but very smooth.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 315.)

SO quickly did the time pass that every one was surprised when Aunt Eliza called: 'Joan, Norah, it is a quarter to four. You will have to start now, or you will be late.'

Left to themselves the boys went on playing until the tea was brought out. As soon as that meal was over they intended to start for Grangely, for they wanted to catch Joe Bedford as he returned from his work.

'Don't be too late home,' said Aunt Eliza, 'and don't be tempted to go into the grounds of the Manor, by anything that Joe may have to tell you.'

'All right, Auntie; don't worry about us,' said Stanley. He did not want to promise that they would not go into the grounds of the Manor. They had not promised the Doctor, and though they did not mean to go unless it were for something very important, they did not want to be bound down by any promises.

'If Joe really has seen Jinks go in there, I vote that we go to-morrow morning and have another look,' said Stanley, as they rode off in the direction of the village of Grangely. 'I know Father does not want us to go in there, but still, if Jinks is there I do not see how we are to get him unless we do go.'

'But Mr. Haverford said that he would let Father know if Jinks were found there,' objected Jim.

'Yes, but suppose he has got shut up somehow? He may never be found, and he will starve to death,' said Stanley, who had a conviction that it was on the forbidden ground their dog was to be found.

'Perhaps we shall know more when we have seen Joe Bedford,' said Raymond. 'It does not seem playing the game to go there when the Doctor has asked us not to; but, as you say, if Jinks has got shut up he may never be found.'

'For my part I don't see where he *could* be shut up. There are no lodges out in the wood, and he would hardly go close to the house,' said Jim.

They found Joe Bedford at home, and he was quite willing to tell them all that he knew about the dog.

'I was going to see my mother, and I saw a dog go in at the gates of the Manor,' he said. 'I called to him, and whistled, for I knew that once in there he stood a poor chance of getting out alive. He turned round and looked at me a moment, cheeky-like, and then made off as fast as a streak of lightning right into that little wood. Well, I called and called, and whistled too, but do you think that he would come for that? Not he. He was after the rabbits. They do say there's a main lot of them in there.'

'Do you know Jinks?' asked Jim.

'Well, if you tell me what your dog is like, I will see if it fits in,' said the man.

Stanley described Jinks, and Joe Bedford nodded his head at intervals as he did so. 'Yes, that's him,' he said, when Stanley had finished. 'That's him, and no error. I doubt if you'll see him again.'

They thanked the man for what he had told them, and rode off in the direction of home. About half-way Jim had the misfortune to get a puncture, and this delayed them for some time. They were in a lonely part of the road, and were for a time unable to find out exactly where the damage lay.

'It looks as though we are going to be late home after all,' said Stanley, as once more they mounted and rode off. 'You never can tell with bicycles,' said Jim. 'It will not matter, for it is eight o'clock now, and Auntie and Father are dining at Colonel Foster's to-night, so they will not know that we have not got home.'

They were at the brow of the hill on which stood Dene Manor, when Raymond exclaimed suddenly: 'Look, there is Herr Scharf, I do believe, just going into the wood.'

The other two looked, and saw that there, half-way down the hill, a figure was climbing up the bank, as if to enter the wood that lay on the opposite side of the road to the Manor.

'He must be going for an evening stroll. I suppose he has finished in the surgery,' said Stanley. 'It would be rather a good plan to see where he is going. What do you say?'

The proposal met with the entire approval of the two others. They rode to within a few yards of the spot where they had seen the German enter the wood, and hiding their machines in the bushes, they went in single file after him.

That Herr Scharf was unused to woods was evident, from the clumsy way in which he scrambled from point to point. It was an easy matter to discover his whereabouts, and in time they found that he had come to a stand in a little clearing in the centre of which there stood an oak-tree, very gnarled and weather-beaten. The boys remained hidden and watched to see what the man was going to do. The light was getting bad, but still served to show that he took from the pocket of his coat an inch tape, and with this began measuring in all directions, but beginning every time at the trunk of the oak.

'What on earth is he up to?' asked Jim in a whisper, but the sound must have reached the German dispenser. for he turned suddenly on his heel, and looked straight towards where the three boys were hiding in the undergrowth.

CHAPTER VIII.

HE stood looking for a moment, and once made a step forward, as though he intended to see if there was really any one there; but he checked the impulse, and in another moment he turned once more and went on with his measuring.

When this work took him to a little distance from them, Stanley spoke. 'That was a near thing. He must have uncommonly good ears. It would be rather awkward if he spotted us here. But what is he measuring for?'

'That is what we may find out if we stay here long enough,' said Raymond. 'He is trying to find something, but the question is, what?'

They could say no more just then, for Herr Scharf was once again within earshot. Every now and then he looked up, and glanced swiftly around, almost as though expecting some one to join him. As he measured he kept muttering to himself, as if he were repeating some directions that he was afraid of forgetting.

'Ten feet to the south, and thirteen to the left,' he said once when he was close to the boys. 'Ten to the south, and thirteen to the left.'

'I wonder what he is grunting about?' said Jim, but the words had scarcely left his lips before there came to them the sound as of some one walking towards them through the wood.

(Continued on page 330.)



"He was quite willing to tell them all that he knew."



"Herr Scharf left off measuring on hearing the other approach."

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 327.)

FORTUNATELY the unseen stranger was keeping to the path that ran through the clearing a few yards below where the boys were concealed. Peeping through the bushes they saw at last a man emerge into the open space, and only a glance was needed to assure them that this was the same man whom they had seen in the grounds of the Manor, when he had placed the message in the silver birch. He still wore the black and white check cap, and the shabby tweed clothes. The pallor of his face was increased by the blackness of his hair, and made him noticeable even in that dim light.

'He is not like a servant, and yet I suppose he must be one,' said Stanley, watching the meeting between the two men.

Herr Scharf left off measuring on hearing the other approach, and turned to meet him. What words passed between the two the boys could not tell, for they spoke in low tones, and were some distance away.

'They may come nearer after a little while,' whispered Raymond. 'We should only show where we are if we moved now, and then have to make a bolt for it.'

'We shall have to do that soon in any case. It is getting rather late, I think,' said Stanley.

But just then the two men came closer to the watching boys, and it was possible to hear what they were saying. Herr Scharf was speaking. 'You are sure that these are the right papers—that you have made no mistake?' he asked.

'My dear Herr Scharf, do you think I should make a mistake in a matter like this? It is not to my interest to do so.'

'That iss true, true. But I have studied him for long, very long, and I cannot discofer it.'

'Perhaps I can do better. Have you the papers on you now?'

The German felt in the pockets of the light overcoat that he was wearing, and in time produced a bundle of papers.

'But it is too dark for to read them,' he protested, handing them over to his companion as he spoke.

The other took the papers, and then pulled an electric torch out of his pocket, saying as he did so, 'We prepare for darkness in our work, Herr Scharf.'

He held the torch in one hand and the papers in the other, quickly scanning them as he did so. 'I think we will sit down for a moment,' he said, at last; and to Jim's great delight they sat down on the short grass only three or four yards from the spot where the boys were hidden.

The watchers were unable to exchange a word now, for there was the greatest danger that they would be overheard. As a matter of fact, the noise they made in breathing seemed quite alarming.

'Now, you listen and I will read what the directions say,' said the strange man. 'Then if there is anything that you do not understand, you can ask me now.'

'Dat is a goot plan, if you are sure dat there is no ones to hear,' replied the other. 'But are you sure?'

'Why, who should there be? There is no one in these woods at night, as a rule—only a poacher or two sometimes, and they have their own affairs to attend to, and are not likely to be interested in ours.'

'Ver well, read it aloud,' said Herr Scharf, settling himself down to listen.

The electric torch was once more directed upon the papers, and, selecting one from the bundle, the German's companion began to read: "'The entrance may be found by him who desires it in the following way: Seek first the tree that stands in a little clearing, and stretches its branches every way. This tree may be known by its rugged stem of a great thickness. When the tree is found, measure ten feet due south and then thirteen feet to the left—that is due east. When this spot is found, it will be seen that there is another cleared space. Measure ten feet again, this time to the north. There will be found the entrance.'"

'I haf done it, but dat vill not do,' said Herr Scharf, as though he was rather angry.

'Are you sure that you went in the right direction every time?'

'Of course. But there is noddings to be seen—noddings at all.'

'No, there may not be. You did not expect to see a ready-made door there waiting for you to open it, did you?' laughed the other, in a contemptuous tone. 'Really, Herr Scharf, you will have to learn a little about this kind of work. I can see that. It is not quite so easy as you appear to think. You have made out that black letter, and that is something more than I could do; but now I think I shall have to begin instructing you. If you have found the exact spot, have you marked it in any way?'

'Yes, I did dat. I put one large stone on de top of one other. Come and see him.'

They both rose and went across the clearing, plunging into the undergrowth.

'What is it that they are looking for?' asked Jim, with excitement showing itself in his tone. 'They are jolly keen on finding it, whatever it is.'

'Yes, it looks as though they are searching for something that is buried here in the wood,' said Stanley, thoughtfully. 'I vote that when they have cleared out, we go and take a look for ourselves and see if we can discover what it is. By the way, I don't think that their directions are very good, do you?'

'You mean about the tree?' asked Raymond. 'No, I don't either. That might be almost any tree. But there are other papers, and perhaps they tell more than we heard. Listen! they are coming back again.'

This was true, and in a moment the two men came into sight. They crossed the open space, talking fast in low tones, and, taking the little path, went away once more in the direction of the road.

'Could you hear what they were saying?' asked Raymond, as they arose from their crouching position and stretched themselves.

'Not all of it, but they said "to-morrow," and Herr Scharf said, "A spade will do." They must be going to do a little digging.'

'I rather think that we shall not be far away when they do that,' said Jim, with a laugh. 'Whatever it is that they are after, I mean to have a finger in the pie. Can it be treasure hidden here, do you think?'

'I don't know, but I hardly think so,' replied Stanley. 'But we shall see more in a day or two. It seems to me that in looking for poor old Jinks we have come across something rather interesting.'

They were pushing their way through the undergrowth where Herr Scharf and his companion had

disappeared by this time. It was now quite dark, and they had no electric torch with them to aid them in finding the spot that the German had marked with two stones. Therefore it is not surprising that they were a little time in finding it. It was Jim who at last discovered it, and that was by striking his foot against the stones and disarranging them. Raymond struck a match, and they put the stones as they imagined that they had been before, and then Stanley bent some twigs of a bush growing close by, in order that they might be able to find the spot again, supposing that the stones were removed.

'We had better hurry off home now,' said Jim; and they accordingly made their way out of the wood with much greater speed, and much less noise, than the two who had preceded them.

They found their bicycles, and lost no time in getting home. The girls were awaiting them, but the Doctor and Aunt Eliza had not returned from their dinner-party.

'How very strange!' said Joan, when the boys had told their adventures in the wood. 'What can they be looking for?'

'We shall know that later on, I'm sure,' said Stanley; 'but at the same time I wish, instead of all this mystery that we seem to have unearthed, we could find poor old Jinks. See, this is Thursday night, and he has been gone since Monday. I begin to think that we shall not see him again.'

This Stanley said more with the desire of saving his sister from vain hopes which were never likely to be realised than because he had given up all expectation of finding the lost dog. He determined to see his father and ask permission from him to go once more into the grounds of the Manor, for he could not get rid of the impression that it was there that Jinks was to be found.

'I had almost forgotten,' said Norah, suddenly, when they had been talking of other things for some time. 'When Joan and I were coming home I saw this and picked it up. We thought it looked like a message written in that cypher, but there has not been time to puzzle it out.'

As she spoke she handed a scrap of paper to the boys, who scanned it eagerly.

'Where was it that you found this?' asked Jim.

'Down the lane where you went that morning you got into the Manor grounds. That is a short cut, you know, and as we were rather late in leaving we came by it,' said Joan. 'But have you the key, and is it a message, really?'

'It is a message; there's no doubt of that, and, what is more, it is written on the paper that Father uses for his prescriptions!' said Stanley. 'Wait a moment, and I will see what it is all about.'

(Continued on page 342.)

WATCHING THE FIRE.

MY Father says the coals so black,
That Nanny sets alight,
Were forest trees, long ages back,
Where suushine glistened bright.

And when I sit upon the floor
And ev'ry sound is hush'd,
I still can hear the wild winds roar
That through those forests rushed!

And sometimes whistling sounds are heard
When bright the embers glow—
The echoes of some woodland bird
That sang long years ago!

K. E. SHERRIFF

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

X.—THE MAPLE OF CANADA.

WHEN you begin to talk to people about National Emblems, they nearly always say, 'Well, there is the Maple for Canada!' But if you say, 'Yes, of course, but when was it adopted, and why?' then they are 'stumped' and cannot tell you any more. One hears a great deal about the wonderful tints of the maple in the autumn in Canada, and many people think that the maple must have been chosen to represent Canada on that account. The gorgeousness of the display of colour is past description, and it lasts much longer than our autumn tints, because this change of colour is not as with us altogether a sign of decay, but occurs well in the middle of the life of the leaf.

But I was not satisfied with this as an explanation of the choice of the Maple as Canada's emblem, and I think I have found a much better reason, though I cannot vouch for the correctness of my belief, it being simply my own idea. It is that the Sugar Maple gave rise to the choice, because from this source a very large part of the present wealth of the country has arisen; the discovery of the sugar maple must have made a great difference to the revenue of the country.

There is, however, some doubt as to who discovered it, how it was discovered, and where. A legend I came across seems a likely explanation, for, as you know, many great discoveries come about by accident. Here is the story:—Right out in the backwoods of Canada there dwelt a colony of Indians, and as usual one day a squaw (an Indian's wife) was left in the camp to cook her husband's dinner. Now the camp was situated some little distance from a stream, and on this particular occasion the squaw was lazy and did not want to bother to fetch the water in which to cook the moose-meat which she had to prepare. She was evidently an observant person, and it being spring-time, the season of the rising of the sap in trees, she had noticed that from a particular tree near by a fluid was running out from a little hole in the trunk—she knew no better than that it was water—it *looked* like water, so she thought it would do instead of water. She made the hole a little larger, and from it filled her cooking-pot.

Having put it over her fire, she seems to have proceeded to gossip with her neighbours, and forgot all about her husband's dinner. Suddenly, she heard him coming through the woods, so she rushed to 'dish up,' when, to her horror, she found the meat all spoiled in a brown mass at the bottom of the pot. She knew that her husband would be very angry, and would very likely beat her, so she rushed away into the woods.

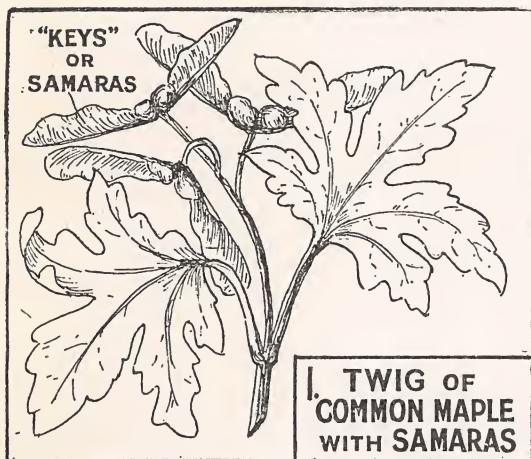
After some time she thought she would creep back and see how things seemed, so she made her way to her camp very carefully, and there to her astonishment she saw her husband looking perfectly satisfied, *licking his fingers*, which he dipped at intervals into the mess at the bottom of the cooking-pan. As it seemed safe, she approached, and when her husband saw her he greeted her with the greatest affection, and praised her for her

wonderful discovery! You see it was the sap of the Sugar Maple she had found, and the Indian evidently had a sweet tooth, as the saying is! I found this legend in a most interesting book called *Myths and Legends of Trees, &c.*, by C. M. Skinner.

Other legends ascribe the discovery, or even *creation*, of maple sugar to some of the great Indian Chiefs of years ago, such as Hiawatha, of immortal fame!

We do not grow the Sugar Maple in England, but it is related to our maples and is very similar in appearance. The Sugar Maple's proper name is *Acer Saccharinum* (saccharine is a sugar substitute of great sweetness). For a description of sugar camps where the sugar is 'tapped,' as it is called, and also for details of the great value of certain trees, you should read the works of Gene Stratton Porter, an American writer whose books are very popular and well known. She describes her country enthusiastically and all the activities of the woods, so that you feel you want to go there at once and see these things for yourself.

Our common Small-leaved Maple is a relation of the sugar maple, and so is our Sycamore, sometimes called Great Maple, but known in Scotland as Plane. There is a certain amount of sugar in the sap of our maples, for if you pass the leaves through your hand, it will be left sticky. Fig. 1 is a sketch of a twig of our own



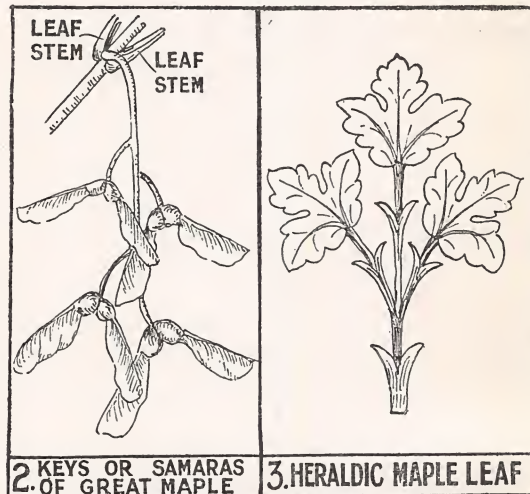
small-leaved maple with its characteristic fruit. I give it so that you will know it when you meet it. Fig. 2 shows you the fruits of the sycamore. I give this to show you the difference in shape: the maple has straighter 'keys' than the sycamore.

In fig. 3 I show you a heraldic representation of the maple-leaf which appears in the coat-of-arms of Ontario and Quebec, and, of course, in the Dominion of Canada Shield, together with the arms of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. This information was given me by the Secretary of the High Commissioner of Canada, but I have been unable to get a copy of the full coats-of-arms in time for this article.

The emblem is much beloved in Canada, and gives a name to one of their national songs, 'The Maple Leaf for Ever.' It is portrayed in all kinds of jewellery, a favourite form being a single leaf enamelled to represent the autumn tints.

Maple wood has been at all times much prized as a

material from which to make beautiful furniture. It has curious knobs on old trees in which the markings are most wonderful. The ancient Romans used to spend vast sums of money on *tables*, the tops of which were inlaid with maple. It is said that our expression, 'Turn the tables,' may have come down to us from those



times, for the story goes that when Roman husbands used to remonstrate with their wives about their extravagance in jewellery, the ladies retaliated by saying, 'Well, what about your tables?' or words to that effect.

There used to be a superstition in England that young children passed through the branches of a maple-tree will have long life. There is a record that in a Sussex town when the people heard that an old maple was to be cut down, they petitioned for it to remain standing, because of this superstition, and the request was granted.

E. M. BARLOW.

JOHN'S BIT.

'COME on, Grierson, we're miles behind the other chaps. Look, there's Mr. Thurston waving to us!'

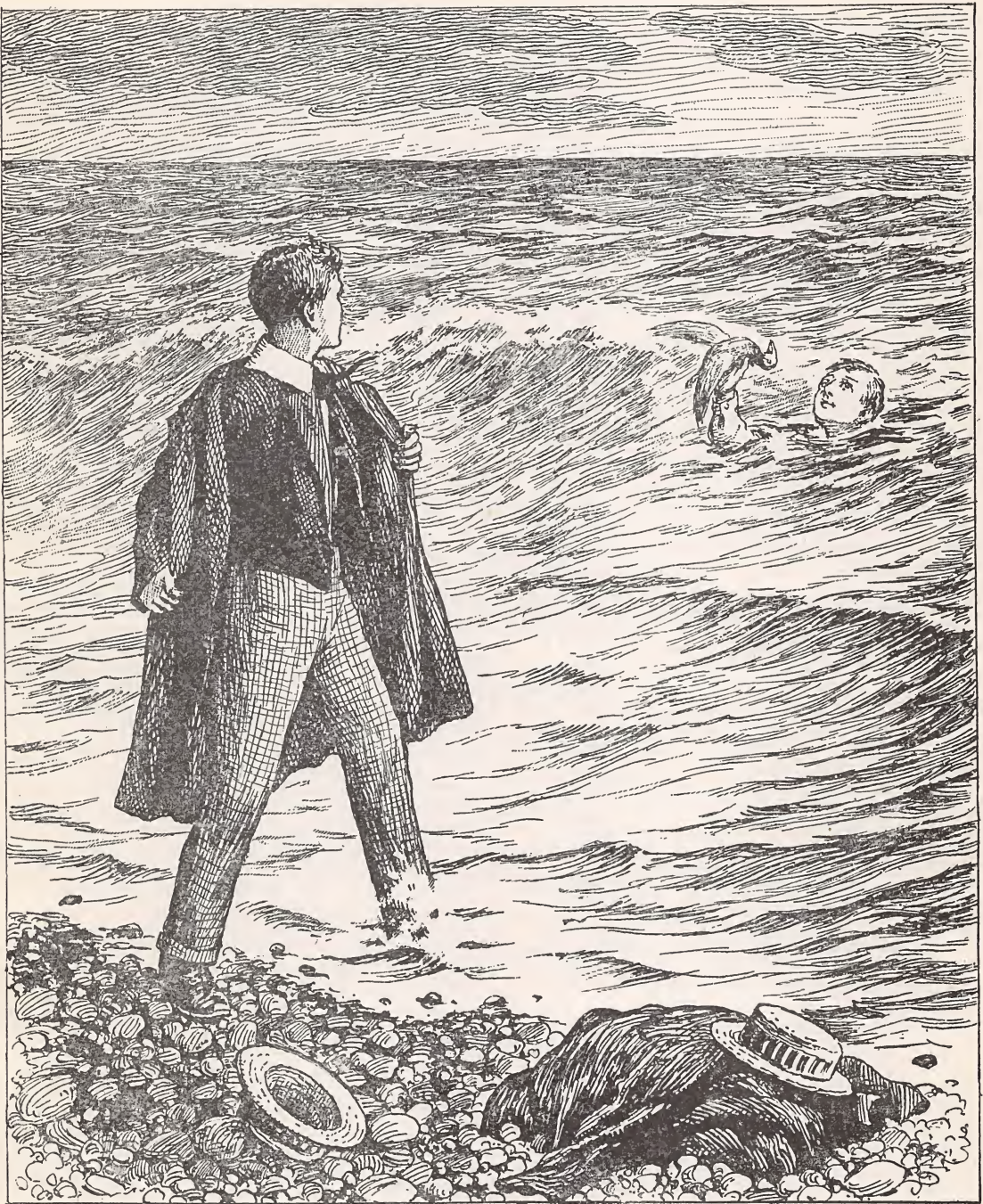
'Let him wave!' growled Grierson, jerking a stone into the sea. 'I loathe these rotten Sunday afternoon walks—and it's worse than ever on his day; he always drags us the same old way along this beastly beach.'

'I like the beach better than going inland,' replied John. 'There are so many cruisers and torpedoes about since the war began; and I found five awfully jolly corneys this afternoon.' He rattled a handful of doubtful-looking pebbles, supposed to be cornelians, in his pocket as he spoke.

'Awfully jolly!' jeered Grierson, with an exaggerated imitation of his companion's voice.

'Hullo, look at that gull!' remarked John, quite unruffled. 'What a rummy way it's flying! It must be tired or something.'

'Gull yourself!' snorted Grierson. 'Don't you know a pigeon when you see one? If I had my air-gun here, I bet I could pot it.' He picked up a stone as he spoke,



"Grierson rushed in to his friend's rescue."

and flung it at the exhausted bird. His careless aim was straighter than he intended: the poor pigeon flapped helplessly for a second and then fell into the sea.

'You beast, you've killed it!' cried John in distress. 'No, it's struggling. Oh, poor thing, it'll drown!'

'Didn't mean it,' grunted Grierson. 'Good shot, though. I say, what are you doing, you ass?'

John was tearing off his heavy overcoat and the tight Eton jacket beneath it.

'You're not going in after it? Don't be a fool! You'll get into a frightful row. In your Sunday clothes, too!'

'Don't care.'

John was in the sea as he spoke, and he caught his breath in a gasp as the cold November water swirled round his legs and waist. The beach shelved down steeply, and three steps took him out of his depth; but John had not been two years at school on the Suffolk coast for nothing, and he had won the Junior Swimming Cup last summer. Half-a-dozen strokes brought him to the drowning bird. He grasped it by the body, and turned towards the shore; but the water was very cold, his wet clothes hampered him, and it was not long before Grierson's coat was also on the beach and he had rushed in to his friend's rescue. The distance was fortunately very short, and soon both boys stood shivering and dripping upon the shingle.

'You are a blooming idiot!' gasped Grierson, but not ill-temperedly this time. 'Wha-what are you doing with the bird?'

'Wrapping her up in my handkerchief. N-now let's bunk after the others.'

The last of the school were straggling through the field-gate when the two caught them up. Mr. Thurston did not wait for answers to his questions, but hurried them both upstairs to get dry clothes and hot milk from the matron.

A quarter of an hour later, with rather an uncomfortable empty sensation inside, they found themselves knocking at the door of the head master's study.

'What's this I hear of you two boys? Mr. Thurston tells me you dawdled behind on the walk this afternoon and came in soaking wet, and that you told him you had been in the sea. I am astonished to have such a report of you, Grierson—you, one of the eldest boys in the school, in the top form, and —'

'It wasn't Grierson's fault, sir,' struck in John eagerly. 'He didn't want to do it; but my clothes weighed me down so, and I got stuck, so he came in to help me.'

'Oh, it was your doing, was it? What were you thinking of? What did you do it for?'

'There was a pigeon, sir,' said John, hesitating. 'It flew as if it was very tired, and then—it fell—at least—I mean it—'

He floundered uncomfortably between respect for the truth and anxiety to screen Grierson. Fortunately the head master did not notice his confusion.

'A pigeon, did you say?' he exclaimed, in an altered tone. 'Flying as if it were tired? What became of it?'

'It's up in my dormitory, sir. I thought if it could be warmed it would get all right.'

'Go and fetch it here.'

John escaped with alacrity, relieved to have the chance of taking the pigeon out of his own bed without any witnesses. A minute later he burst into the study without even the formality of a knock. 'Here it is, sir, and there's a letter or something on a ring round its leg!'

'A carrier pigeon!' exclaimed Grierson.

'Exactly what I expected,' said the head master, unfastening the tiny note.

The boys leaned over eagerly to make out the writing. There were a few words which they could not understand, and there were also several curious-looking signs,

which seemed to be rough drawings of a battleship, a torpedo, and a small bird-shaped aeroplane.

'I can make nothing of it,' said the head master. 'It is evidently a code. The writing is German, however, though it does not appear to make sense. This must be put in the hands of the police at once; with so many spies about, it may prove an important discovery. Well, boys, I believe you have done your bit for the country to-day. I hope the time will come when you will have the chance of doing more.'

Both the boys reddened with delight at this unexpected ending to their escapade.

'Could I keep the pigeon, sir?' asked John earnestly. 'I could have it in the old chicken-house by the carpentering shop. Its wing's broken, so it can't fly again, but I think it would get well.'

'Well, if the authorities have no objection, I have none,' replied the head master. 'I think you certainly deserve the pigeon.'

D. M. PERCY SMITH.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 323.)

CHAPTER XXI.

DICK opened his eyes; his head throbbed, and he felt a heavy weight on his legs that cramped them horribly; and he made an effort to drag his legs free of the weight that lay on them. He was in darkness, and he could not remember where he was—consciousness could tell him nothing of his place in existence, and the blank void of memory and the blank of absolute darkness made his head swim, and he lost consciousness again.

A faint, cold light of the dawn outside was creeping in when Dick opened his eyes a second time. He looked around, but the place presented so strange an appearance that for the moment he did not recognise it, or remember where he was. In front of him the ground was strewn with blocks of stone of enormous size. The Colossus was gone, the plinth and throne with the great knees of the statue only remained; there beside him was the half-open entrance to the hiding-place jammed with the beam. It was some moments before he could grasp the meaning of the desolation, his bewildered eyes wandered slowly round among the masses of stone, where a few dark patches of garments showed, and, to his horror, a human being lay pinned there, dead. The spot where he lay was at the side of the plinth, and was free of stones, the statue having fallen forwards into the temple. Below him lay two dervishes, one across the other, just as they had fallen, and a little higher up, almost beside—he remembered it all now—Abdulla! He raised himself to his knees. Yes, it was Abdulla, with the great spear in his chest, its shaft broken: one arm was thrown out from his side, the other upward, and bent at the elbow, his head sideways as if it were resting on his hand—the still figure looked as if it were rousing from a sleep. The upturned face was serene, the lips parted as if he still smiled as he had done when he gave Dick that last look of encouragement. Dick was past tears, but the pose and expression of the dead man—his hero—was printed on his brain for all time. At Abdulla's throat a small article glittered—

the links of a steel chain with the amulet attached. Dick took it as a relic and placed it in his pocket.

Still dazed and with throbbing head, he turned to the hiding-place, thoughts of Harry dawning on his mind. With difficulty he managed to squeeze himself through the aperture, and found it empty. He sat down and made an effort to collect his thoughts. 'The ring—yes, the ring! Pull the ring downwards—not out.' He did so. A stone, like half a millstone set upright and on a pivot, revolved, disclosing a space large enough for a man bending his shoulders to step through. The inside was quite dark. He paused again and thought. Then, remembering the things they had brought to the place and stored away, he returned for candles, and, lighting one, stumbled along a slightly descending tunnel, which after a short distance became level and then ascended till a corner was reached where the passage turned sharply in the opposite direction, but still upward, then another sharp turn, and it began to dawn on Dick that he was in a similar zigzag passage to those in the temple towers. He continued to turn corners, always ascending, and he noted that as he did so the length of the passage from angle to angle was decreasing. Yes, it was like the zigzag in the tower—or was it the same passage? A bewildered feeling of being lost in an endless maze was oppressing his weakened brain when he saw a light before him, and in a moment Harry had him by the arm. What a pale, worn-faced Harry it was that led him into a dark chamber where the small yellow flame of a candle burnt, and where the 'Man of Mystery' sat with bent head. Dick was glad to slide down into a corner without uttering a word. Harry's face now became radiant, for he had endured two hours of bitter misery, and had despaired of ever seeing Dick again. Twice he had traversed the zigzag passage to its beginning, but neither he nor the 'Man of Mystery' could find the ring on the inside to get admittance into the hiding-place. He was about to start again to make an attempt to move the stone with a small piece of iron he had found, when his heart bounded at seeing Dick's light. It was a piteous tale to which he had to listen, as Dick told in disjointed sentences of the fate of Abdulla, and the horror of the catastrophe in the temple. Their present position was sufficiently desperate, for the chamber in which they had taken refuge had no outlet, and their only hope lay in being able by some means to force the stone at the entry: but Dick was not equal to making any attempt in that direction for the moment; he tried to pull himself together, but felt that come what would he must rest awhile. 'Give me an hour's rest,' he said, 'and I shall be fit again.'

The 'Man of Mystery' made him a bed in the corner with his blanket, and Dick lay down and dozed. The candle burnt down till it became a little pool of grease, then the end of the wick dropped, and they were in darkness. Dick still dozed. The 'Man of Mystery's' head sank on his breast, and his turban slipped over one eye, and Harry's head nodded lower and lower. (Blessed angel of sleep, do we thank God enough for thee? Bending over us in silence, smoothing out the lines of care, and pouring new wine into the old bottles, without cracking them.)

At last Dick's eyes opened in the darkness, and he began to think in a connected manner. They were caught in a trap. If they forced the stone, they would have to pass through the horrors of the Rock Temple and chance meeting any stray dervishes, and then make

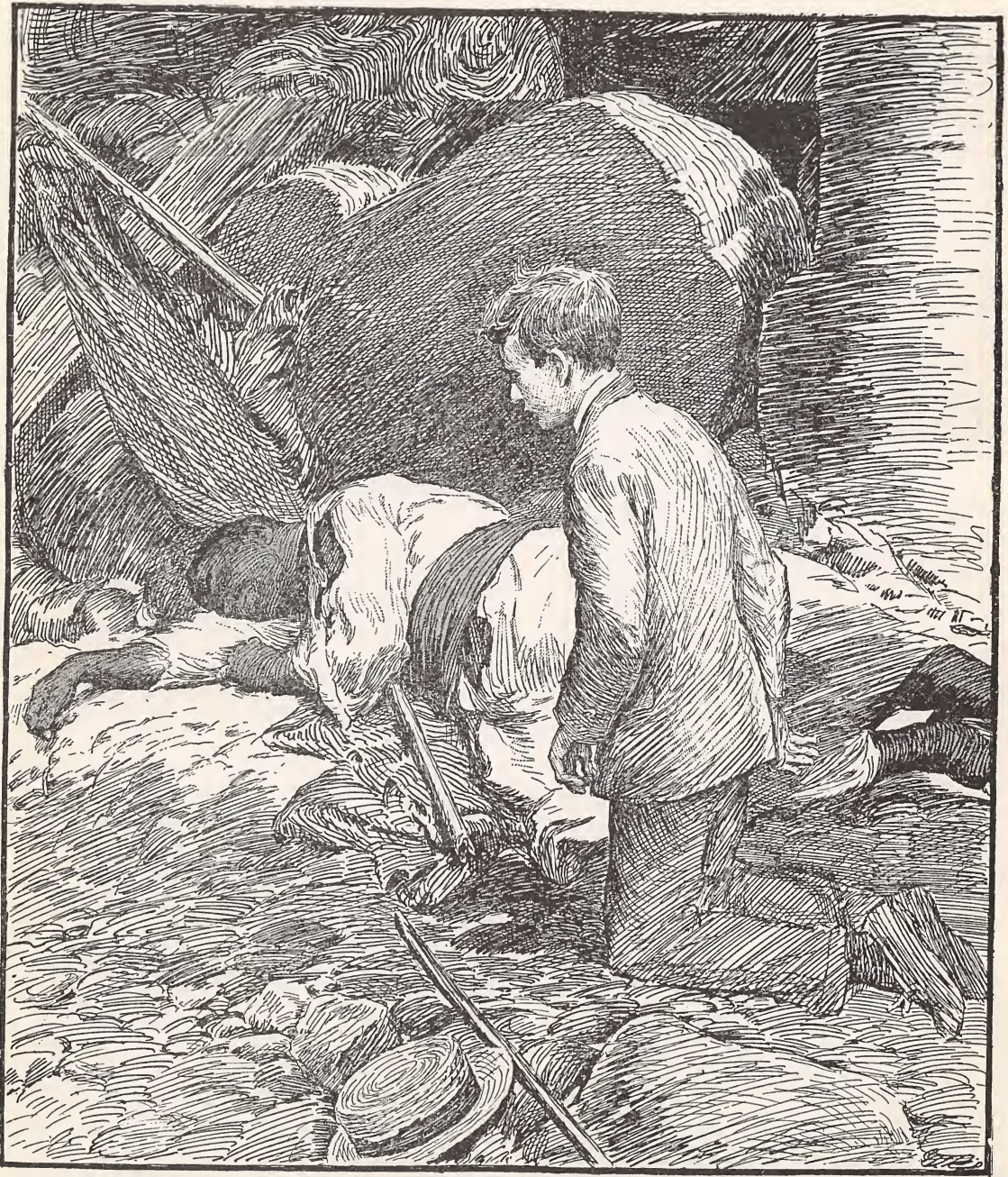
for the Oasis: but how force it? The stone worked all right from the other side, and when he had passed through he had taken hold on something to close it—he thought it was the ring, but he was sure he had taken hold on something on the inside. Harry said there was nothing. They must go and examine it carefully with the only candle they had left—the one in his pocket. If there was nothing to lay hold of—there must be, he had passed through since Harry had been down and he remembered the action of his hand quite distinctly as he staggered through and revolved the stone. Well, if there was nothing, they must find the joint between the stone and the surrounding ones. What had they got in the way of a tool to force it? So he lay with his eyes open in the darkness, revolving the matter again and again in his mind and looking listlessly at a faint blur of light in the opposite corner. At last he sprang up, exclaiming, 'Where does that light come from?' It was like the faintest flicker of a will-o'-the-wisp on the vaulted roof and had not been visible when the candle was alight, nor indeed would have been noticeable then, so faint was it, but for its flickering movement. Dick dashed at it: he felt for it with his hand, but it was gone. He looked all around: it was there again. His companions thought that he had taken leave of his senses. Dick had found out now from whence it came—from under his feet. He was down on his knees now, scraping with his fingers: it was a grating and light filtered up through it and was reflected on the roof in the corner. Harry's satchel had been thrown down, in part covering it. Dick had now cleared it of dust and dirt, and his face was pressed close to it as eagerly as if he had found a gold-mine. His fingers clutched the bars of the grating, his shoulders and arms working convulsively.

'Selim!' he shouted, and sprang to his feet and jumped like one possessed—'Selim!'

When Harry went on his knees and looked through the openings of the grating, the strangest sight in the world met his view. He was looking into a light apartment immediately beneath him, and a bird's-eye view of a coloured boy bending over and lighting a small oil-stove was printed on his retina. No longer, however, was the face of the boy bent over the stove, for at the noise of Dick's shouting, it was thrown upward with an expression of terror on it, and now looked straight into Harry's. A big box was rigged up as a table, a white cloth lay on it and a breakfast was spread. On one side of the room was a low bed, and a bearded man lay on it—it was Uncle Charlie. To complete the picture with a touch which is beyond the painter's art—the aroma of hot coffee came up through the grating.

The boy's antics somewhat bewildered the 'Man of Mystery,' but when he was prevailed upon to go on his hands and knees and take his turn at the grating, his English was not adequate to express his feelings: he simply said 'Very nice,' which he seemed to think a terribly strong expression. Selim was now shouting wildly from below, and the boys no less wildly from above, and in the midst of the din a small crowbar was passed up through the grating. For five brisk minutes bar and fingers were plied and stones and mortar flew about; then the boys made a most unceremonious descent into the Scribe's chamber and the 'Man of Mystery' a still more undignified entry.

(Continued on page 339.)



"Yes, it was Abdulla, with the great spear in his chest."



"While the words were still on his lips, Godfrey was struck."

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

IX.—NAMUR.

THE one town admirably fortified by nature.' This is what Julius Cæsar called Namur, and the description is a good one, for the city stands in a strong position among hills, with the river Meuse guarding it on the east. However, in spite of these advantages, the natural defences have never been considered enough, and a great citadel was built, so that Namur for many centuries was considered one of the strongest fortresses in Europe.

The position of the town, as a glance at a map will show us, is one of great importance, for it is not far from the frontiers of Belgium, and guards the rich plains and industrial cities of Brabant and Flanders from hostile invasion both from the south and from the east. Sieges have been very frequent in its history, and on several occasions the city has been fiercely bombarded. Terrible damage has been done in these attacks, and indeed there are very few ancient buildings now remaining. One church still has a hole in its roof that was made by a French shell.

The two most famous of Namur's many sieges took place within a few years of each other, the one in 1692, when the town was captured by Louis XIV., and the second in 1695, when it was retaken by a strong army under William III., King of England.

At the end of the seventeenth century there was war between France and the allied countries of Spain, England, Holland, and Germany. William of Orange, who had only lately succeeded to the English throne, was in command of the Dutch and English troops.

In 1692 Louis had already gained possession of the greater part of the Low Countries, and Namur was one of the few fortresses that still held out against him. He marched upon the city with a large army, and, knowing that attempts would be made by the allies to relieve it, a second French army was stationed to the north, to guard the approach from Brussels.

William, meanwhile, drew near, but found himself stopped by this force, and to add to the difficulties, terrible rains set in and the country was flooded. Despairing of assistance, Namur surrendered on June 20th, and Louis marched into the city, almost within sight of William and his army, who, on his return to England, was severely criticised for his conduct of the whole campaign, and particularly for the loss of the famous fortress. There were, on the other hand, great rejoicings in France, but these were not very long-lived, and only three years later Namur changed hands once more.

It was in May that King William left England on a new expedition, and landed in Holland to join his allies. He marched upon Namur at once, and the French, realising his intention, managed to dispatch seven regiments to the threatened fortress. These were under the command of Marshal Boufflers, one of the most famous of Louis' generals. The reinforcements entered Namur, and the garrison was thus increased to about fifteen thousand men.

Everything now seemed to be in favour of the French, for the fortifications of the town had been strengthened during the three years that had elapsed since its last capture; it was well provisioned, and there was enough

ammunition to enable it to withstand a siege. To add to the difficulties of the Allies, Marshal Villeroi was already in Belgium at the head of a large French army, and might be expected to march to the relief of the fortress.

The siege began early in July, and the investment of the city was immediately followed by a terrific bombardment, for the leaders of the attacking troops realised that there was no time to be lost.

Within a week a great assault was made, in which English, Scotch, and Dutch regiments took part, and we hear that King William watched the progress of the fighting, and exclaimed from time to time, 'See my brave English!'

Ten days later there was another attack and again William witnessed the battle; for, although careful of the safety of his servants, he was quite reckless himself, and often ran great risks. During this assault a civilian, named Godfrey, the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, was present with the King, having come over to Belgium to settle the financial business of the army. William said to this man, 'As you are no adventurer in the trade of war, you should not expose yourself to the hazards of it.' Godfrey replied that he was in no more danger than the King himself, and William then said, 'I am only doing my duty.' At this moment, while the words were still on his lips, Godfrey was struck by a cannon-ball and killed.

The siege went on until August 2nd, and then the town surrendered, but the bombardment of the citadel continued with renewed fury.

A writer of the time tells us that so terrific was it, that the hill itself seemed to shake, and the 'besiegers could scarce sustain the horror of their experiment.'

Through it all Boufflers stood firm, for there was a tradition in the French army that no Marshal of France had ever surrendered, and he was determined that he would not be the first to break the heroic record.

At last, however, the end came. On August 21st the final assault on the great fortress took place and, although the defenders fought with extraordinary courage, they were beaten back and their defences broken.

In this battle two hundred Scotch soldiers especially distinguished themselves. They were commanded by Lieutenant Cockle, and he ordered them to advance and to plant their colours on the palisades. The men rushed forward, and attacked so violently that they succeeded in breaking through the barrier, and then taking possession of the cannon, they turned them upon the French.

Boufflers now agreed to capitulate, realising that his position was hopeless, but his enemies did not seek to humiliate him. The remnants of the brave garrison, a bare five hundred out of the original fifteen thousand, marched out of the citadel with all the honours of war, their drums beating and their banners flying, Boufflers lowering his sword in token of surrender, as he passed the leaders of the allied armies.

This happened on August 26th, 1695, and two hundred and thirty years later, on the anniversary of the great attack, Namur was bombarded again, by the German army which had swept southward through the wooded valley of the Meuse; and its forts, which had been considered well-nigh impregnable, were silenced in a few days by artillery compared to which the much-vaunted cannons and mortars of the seventeenth century were mere playthings. A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.

WORK AND PLAY.

I MUST not think my work seems dull
Because it never seems to change,
For it is so with other things—
With stars, with sun, and winds that range.

The sun still shines the same old way,
And that for every one is best—
It rises in the East each day,
And always sets just in the West.

The stars shine just the same each night,
The rain falls as it always did,
Upon the fields, the trees, the flowers—
They always do as they are bid.

And though my work seems dull sometimes,
And I could wish 'twere more like fun,
Yet after all 'tis very sweet
To play, and know that work is done.

FRANK ELLIS.

THE MYSTERY OF
AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEY.

(Continued from page 335.)

IT was a joyous meeting, and there were long stories to tell on both sides. The boys were grieved at Uncle Charlie's accident, though the worst effects were past and only the injury to his leg remained: it had been bandaged by Selim in quite a workmanlike manner, using his scarf and two sticks as a splint, but was still quite useless. The Professor told how he had worked his way into the Scribe's Chamber, but how on entering had been struck down by a further fall of stones, and he spoke with gratitude of Selim's devotion. The boys shook Selim by the hand, patted him on the back, and shook hands with him again and again. Selim's face shone with delight.

The 'Man of Mystery' was introduced in an informal manner, but his eyes brightened up when Uncle Charlie greeted him in Arabic, his tongue was loosed, and the two men hurled Arabic at one another for the space of half-an-hour. The boys were out of it, so they got the grinning Selim into a corner and deluged him with questions. Then Uncle Charlie turned the tables on the boys by introducing the 'Man of Mystery' to them—'Herr Brandorf, a Moravian Missionary.' The 'Man of Mystery' was no longer a mystery. Briefly they learned his story. He had laboured as a missionary among the Soudanese for two-and-twenty years; the last eleven spent at Omdurman in all the horror and humiliation of slavery. Blows and reviling had been his daily lot, he was too old for the heaviest manual labour, but the lash had waked him each morning to a monotonous round of the most menial offices, garnished with threats and curses. Long years of humiliation had so eaten into him that he would shrink before the humblest man; not only had he forgotten his English in those cruel years, but had lost the language of his fatherland. He was the captive whose escape had been planned by the authorities at Cairo, Abdulla being the guide selected to

bring it about. This had been accomplished, but he and Abdulla had been separated as they made their way from well to well in the desert, on the appearance of the force of dervish raiders, and Abdulla had hurriedly sent him forward with directions to lie hidden in the temple till he could join him. The remainder of the story was only too well known to the boys, and the name of Abdulla saddened them. Their story was told, and its tragic ending lay as heavy on the heart of Uncle Charlie as it did on theirs. Silence fell on the little group; at last Uncle Charlie said gravely: 'Well, boys, he lived faithfully, and he died nobly. Could anything be better?'

Selim prepared breakfast on a more extensive scale; there was plenty to eat, as he had made a recent journey to the Oasis, but the two tin mugs had to serve for five. The steaming coffee revived them. Dick and Harry were themselves again; they were still surrounded with perils, but new life and hope flowed in their veins as they looked in the face of Uncle Charlie and realised that they were all together once more.

'So this is the Chamber of Tahe the Scribe,' said Dick, looking around; 'not a very gorgeous apartment, but we have been in worse, haven't we, Harry? And what about the hidden treasure, Uncle? There's Selim's pots and pans and the oil-stove, but I don't see much in the way of treasure.'

'Boys,' said Uncle Charlie, smiling, 'the treasure is all right—a wonderful collection of papyri that may be pieced together without much difficulty. It includes a remarkable list of the ancient Kings of Egypt, and there are some tablets—inscriptions in cuneiform—that will make the big-wigs at home open their eyes, I assure you. Though how we shall get them away, I can't say.'

'Where are they?' exclaimed Dick and Harry in one voice, starting and looking around.

'Well, in point of fact,' replied Uncle Charlie, laughing, 'you are spilling your coffee on them now. Lift the table-cloth and you will see.'

The treasure was in the painted box that served as a table—a chest about four and a half feet long, three feet broad, and about the same in depth. It had the remains of coloured decorations on its sides, among which could be seen the device of the winged solar disc and serpents. There lay the treasure; the boys were delighted, and the Professor beamed triumphantly. But how they should remove it, or indeed how they themselves should escape, were problems that required some solving.

It was now broad daylight and yet another surprise awaited the boys. On looking through the opening of the Scribe's Chamber their eyes dilated at the sight of a broad stretch of water where the desert had been: the Nile had risen rapidly, and, according to Selim, bade fair to rise higher than it had for years. It was over the banks of Crocodile Creek, which could be distinguished only by its line of reeds and stunted trees, and the Dismal Swamp was a great lake as it had been in former times. The Oasis was now almost an island, and the higher ridges of the desert rose above the water as long ribbons of sand-bank. The water was not more than a hundred feet from the base of the temple tower, while a tongue of water connecting with the Dismal Swamp surrounded it like a moat and stretched in the direction of the rocky cliffs round which they had fled the night before. It was a startling change, and, moreover, a new danger, for their stock of provisions was small, and should the Nile continue to rise they would be cut off from



"Their eyes dilated at the sight of a broad stretch of water."

their supplies at the Oasis. The prospect was not cheering. But Selim told them that the water, at present, was quite shallow, except in places where there had been a depression. He had been down the previous night by means of the rope, and found he could wade a great distance in the direction of Crocodile Creek—the water not reaching to his knees: the deep

holes were the only danger, so far. Selim had a plan of escape, which, now the boys had come, he was anxious to put into execution straightway, but his fertile imagination was not always to be relied on, as the boys knew full well—his schemes were vivid and picturesque, but did not always work out.

(Continued on page 350.)



"The first thing they saw was Master Jem, sitting by the gipsies' fire."

OUR JEM.

JEM was such a nice-looking little boy, and he was so much younger than all of us, his elder brothers and sisters, that he was a great pet. We liked to dress him up, and to take him out on special occasions; and

we were never weary of admiring his beautiful dark eyes and curly hair, or of thinking how much better he was than were other people's rather tiresome little brothers.

But to tell the truth, Jem had one great failing: he was a rover—and he had begun his roving at such a very early age as to make the propensity quite alarming.

When he was a little tiny boy, hardly more than a baby, Jem—left quietly playing in the front garden, with his wheelbarrow, or the kitten—would be suddenly discovered to be missing; and then there was quite a long search before he could be found. Jem did not get into mischief in these absences; but he did not seem to know that any difference could exist between running out for five minutes—which perhaps did not matter—or staying away for two hours and a half—which put everybody in a fever of anxiety.

Although we knew them so well we could not get accustomed to Jem's ways; there was always the same hue and cry, the same excited search.

Very likely the child would be found two or three streets off, watching, with all his eyes, while some men repaired an old wall, or painted a house. 'Is this your little chap, ma'am?' one of the workmen would say to mother. 'He has been looking at us for an hour, or more: nice little fellow—asks a heap of questions.'

So he did. Jem would talk to every one in a friendly way; he had a lovely, instinctive trust in his fellow-creatures; and we all earnestly hoped that nothing would ever happen to destroy his faith. Of course it was wrong of Jem to cause as much trouble as he sometimes did by these wanderings of his; but he was so little, and so innocent about it all, that no one could be very angry with him; at least, not till the worst time came.

Jem had grown a little bigger then; he might have been as much as six years old, and was trusted to go to school by himself. There was to be a whole holiday at his school, and Mother was rather disturbed about it, as none of the older ones had a holiday too.

'Let me go out and play!' said Jem, in the early morning, 'I'll come back soon.' After some demur he was given some biscuits, to put in his pocket, and went off in high glee.

Would you believe it, that that was the last we saw of Jem, all that day, or that night either? No one expected him very much till towards dinner-time, but when he did not come in to dinner, or to tea—and when the shades of evening began to fall, and still he had not appeared—there was the greatest distress about him.

We were all searching for him, father, brothers, and sisters; only poor Mother stayed at home, weeping, and wishing over and over again that she had never let Jem go out by himself.

We looked in all sorts of places, likely and unlikely: Father went to the police station and told all about it; and, when it grew dark, there was a search party with lanterns. There was no river or canal near our town, so we could not think that he had fallen into the water. There was a pond in the park, but the park-keeper was quite sure that no little boy answering to Jem's description had been there.

The whole night passed in a vain search, and we were all distracted with grief and fear when my eldest brother, Bob, had a sudden thought. 'Father,' he said, 'do you remember taking Jem to King's Heath, one day in the spring, when the gipsies were there?'

Father remembered well enough; but King's Heath was miles away: he did not think Jem could ever have got so far. However, a forlorn hope was better than none: and Father and Bob set off together for the Heath. It was a long way, and they were pretty well worn out when they got there, but the first thing they saw was Master Jem, sitting by the gipsies' fire, eating a cake.

Jem looked ever so glad when he saw Father; his face lighted up in the wonderful way it had when he was pleased, and, dropping his cake, he ran up.

'Dad,' he said, 'I got lost, and the man here took care of me. They were all kind, and gave me cake and milk. They made me a bed, to sleep on the ground, and told me to stop till morning and then they would find you.'

Then the gipsy man and his wife came up, and confirmed Jem's story. 'We found him on the Heath quite dead beat, Mister,' said the gipsy. 'He said he wanted to see us basket-making, like he'd seen us once, along of his dad. We showed him our work, but the poor little chap was all tired out, and we didn't see what to do but keep him till his folks came to look after him.'

When Jem understood what trouble and grief his going off had caused, even he was impressed; he has been very good about staying at home since; but sister Ella, who is rather fanciful, says that she thinks when Jem grows up he will be an explorer. C. J. BLAKE.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 331.)

CHAPTER IX.

'DON'T you think it would be better if we all went up to the play-room?' suggested Norah, when Stanley was about to go in search of the key with which to read the message.

'Yes of course. We have the key in the desk there, and there is no danger of our being interrupted. And then we had better get to bed, for it will not do for Father to find us up when he and Aunt Eliza come in,' said Stanley, who decided that if he did not get a chance to see his father to ask leave to enter the Manor grounds, he must go without.

They all went to the top of the house, and, lighting the lamp in the play-room, set to work to read the message. Of course with the key beside them this was easy enough. 'I will meet you by the tree in the wood this evening.' This was the message that the paper bore, and no doubt it had been written by the man wearing the black and white check cap whom the boys had seen with Herr Scharf that evening in the wood.

'I expect he went there to find a message, and he must have dropped it on the way,' said Jim.

'Herr Scharf wrote this; the figures are not the same as those we found the other day,' declared Raymond, who had been examining the paper closely.

'Yes, they are different, and there is another thing we have not thought of,' said Joan. 'This is written on a piece of the paper that Father uses to write prescriptions on; and that other man could not have got it.'

'Of course. I wonder that we did not think of that before,' said Jim. 'It seems that this message-leaving dodge is practised by both of them. Well, the only thing I cannot understand is how it come to be in the lane.'

'I think that the man for whom it was meant must have found it and read it, and perhaps put it into his pocket,' said Norah. 'Then when he was climbing that gate into the lane, it fell out of his pocket.'

'That may be it,' said Stanley thoughtfully. 'Well, I am going to bed,' he added, putting away the papers in the old desk and locking it once more.

'Yes, it is awfully late, almost ten o'clock,' said Joan, looking at her watch. 'Come Norah, let's make haste. I mean to have another look for Jinks in the morning, even if it is no use. I can't give up looking.'

When the boys were alone once more Stanley said: 'If you don't care to come, never mind, but I intend to go to the Manor grounds to-morrow early, and I shall slip a note under Father's door to say that I have gone there, and why. I really do not think that he will mind, and I am pretty certain that that is the only place where it is of any use to look for Jinks.'

'I will go,' said Raymond, at once, and Jim also agreed to make one of the party.

'When shall we start?' he asked, as they entered their own room.

'About four or half-past. The earlier the better, for I don't want to see any one. People in a village like this notice if you only sneeze, and our going into the Manor grounds would interest them a lot.'

Stanley, as on the previous occasion, promised to rouse the other two, and as a consequence had a very disturbed night himself. He heard his father go to his room, and was for a moment inclined to go and ask him then and there about his project for the morning; but on second thoughts he decided to do as he first intended, and leave a note telling where they had gone under the door of his father's room in the morning.

At last four o'clock came, and he roused the other two. 'We will go out by the side door again,' he said; and then he went downstairs to find some provisions whilst the others finished dressing.

It was a fine morning, with the sun already shining, when the three boys stepped out of doors. Getting their bicycles they mounted and rode off in the direction of the Manor. They turned down the lane, and dismounting at the gate, lifted the bicycles over it, and were soon hurrying off to the spot where the tree growing close to the wall assisted them to scale it.

'We will leave the bicycles on this side of it, then they cannot possibly be seen from the lane,' said Stanley, and as he spoke he wheeled his machine to the side of the tree farthest from the road.

'Now we shall have to go carefully,' said Jim, when they had climbed the tree and dropped down on the other side of the wall. 'We shall hear that chap we saw the other morning if he is about, but we don't want him to hear us. Where shall we go first?'

'To the silver birch,' said Stanley at once, 'when we can take a look round. That is about the highest spot in the grounds, and if you remember it was up there that we heard the noise like Jinks barking.'

Accordingly they made their way to the place where the silver birch stood on the summit of the little hill. There was no one in sight, and not a sound reached the three boys that told them there was any one about at that early hour.

'Wait a moment,' said Raymond in a whisper, when they had reached the edge of the clearing in which stood the silver birch. 'We had better listen and make quite sure there is no one about.'

This was good advice, for, although they had made very little noise themselves, they had not been so well able to listen while moving along. They waited, straining their ears to catch any sound, however slight, that

would tell them there was some one about; but they heard nothing.

'There isn't anything,' said Jim. 'I vote we go and take a look in the letter-box.'

'One of us had better do that alone; there is no need for all to go, and one would stand less chance of being seen, supposing that there is any one watching,' said Stanley.

'All right, I will go,' said Jim, and stepping from their hiding-place, he went swiftly up the slope to the tree. It did not take him long to find the cut in the bark, and inserting the point of his knife under the edge of it he raised the triangular piece of bark and peeped in. But there was no paper concealed there this time, and, satisfied on this score, he rejoined the others.

'No go. There's nothing there,' he said. 'I suppose it is too early for the gentleman. What are we going to do now?'

'Do? Why, look for Jinks, of course. I think we had better do as we did that other time, and one go in one direction, and one in the other. Only this time we will change over and take one another's sections, in case either of us missed anything on Wednesday morning.'

'Right you are,' said Raymond. 'Give the orders, captain, and we will obey.'

Stanley then allotted a portion of the little wood to them, so that Raymond took the area that he had examined the other day, while he took Jim's and Jim took his. 'Now there ought to be no chance of missing anything,' he said. 'But above all, keep your ears open, and if you hear anything like a bark wait and see if it is repeated, and try to tell where it comes from.'

They separated then, and were soon at some distance from each other. They went slowly, and searched thoroughly, especially in such spots as by the number of rabbit-holes suggested that they might conceal traps. But there was no sign of Jinks. Raymond, who had heard that bark when they were in the wood before, strained his ears, to hear if there were any repetition of it, but there was nothing.

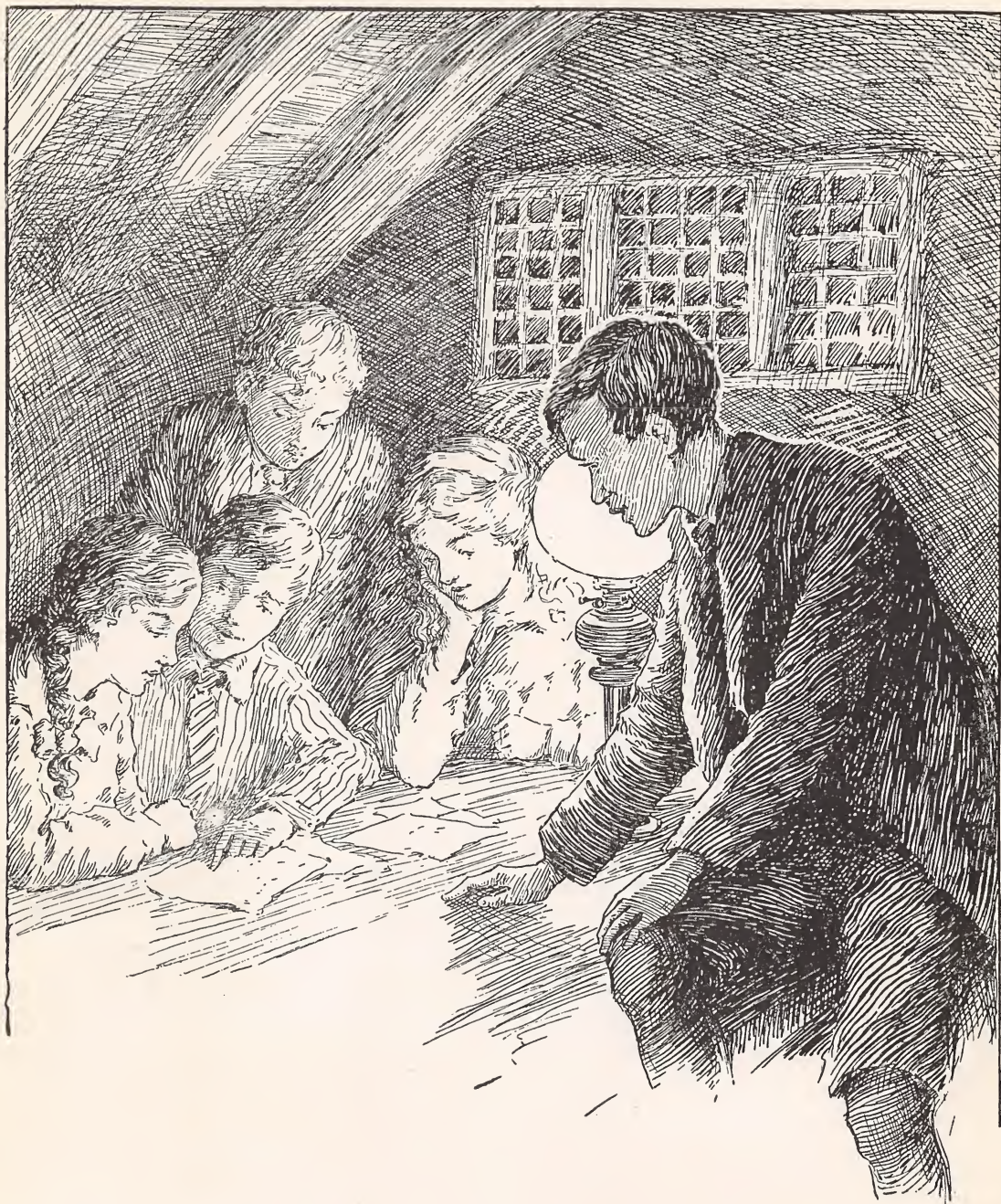
'This is a pretty hopeless task. I wonder if the old fellow who lives in this place has had him shot, after all,' he thought to himself, as, having finished his section, he sought the meeting-place, which was this time the spot that they had started from, close to the silver birch. Just then sounds coming towards him made him think for a moment that either Stanley or Jim was returning; but a second later he was convinced that this was not the case, for they would never make so much noise as this.

'It must be the man whom we saw the other time,' thought the boy, and he looked swiftly round to see where to hide.

Of course he was not visible as it was, being in the undergrowth; but if this man chanced to leave the path, and take a short cut through the bushes, it might be rather unpleasant for him.

The holly bushes which had sheltered them on the other occasion were close to him, and worming his way towards them, he was soon concealed, and peeping through the prickly foliage to get a glimpse of the man who was approaching. He came into view at last, and Raymond saw that his surmise was correct. It was the same man that they had seen before, and the same whom they had seen last night in company with Herr Scharf in the wood on the other side of the road.

(Continued on page 346.)



"Set to work to read the message."



~“Have you found anything?”

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By Edna Lake.

(Continued from page 343.)

THE strange man went straight up to the silver birch, and passing out of sight was evidently putting a message into the cut bark. He soon reappeared, and was once more crossing the open space in front of Raymond, when a sound came which almost caused the boy to call out and thus reveal his presence there.

It sounded far away, and weak into the bargain, but it was unmistakably a bark, and it did not come from the village. Of that Raymond was convinced.

The man paused in crossing to the path that led away down the slope, and towards the house. He too had heard the noise, and, like Raymond, he was no doubt trying to locate it. He turned and glanced round, but of course saw nothing. He was about to move on again when the bark was repeated, a little louder this time, but still sounding distant. The man paused, and a look almost of fear came over his face—or so Raymond thought.

After standing a moment or two longer, the man went on his way once more down the slope, and, a second or two after, the other two boys, who had been close by all the time, rejoined Raymond.

'Did you hear it?' asked he, in a whisper.

'Rather! I should think we did,' replied Stanley. 'I'm dead certain that it is old Jinks, and if it were not that the chap might hear I would whistle to him, and see if we could make him hear. Where on earth can he be?'

'It is a puzzler, and no mistake. He is somewhere about, but I can't for the life of me see where,' said Jim. 'But, I say, I am going to get that message, and copy it out.'

He crept out of their hiding-place, and soon had the satisfaction of taking a slip of paper from the letter-box, as he called it. Scribbling down the array of figures written upon it on a piece of paper that he had brought for the purpose, he once more returned it to its place, and rejoined the other two, who were by this time down by the wall.

'Have you got it?' asked Stanley, as they made their way across the meadow.

'Yes; I have got it, and we will read it when we get home. By the way, did you leave a note for Father?'

'Yes,' replied Stanley. 'And when he has heard what we have to tell him, I don't think he will have any objection to make to what we have done. It is as clear as a pikestaff that Jinks is there, and I can't help thinking we are a lot of idiots not to have discovered just where he is hidden before now. But we will go again, and look till we do find him.'

CHAPTER X.

'Have you found anything?'

Such was the greeting accorded the three boys by Norah and Joan, who, from the front door, had seen them enter the drive, and had run to meet them.

'We heard, but we have not seen Jinks,' replied Raymond; and Stanley went on with the narrative.

'Oh! let's go there as soon as breakfast is over,' cried Joan, all impatience to find her pet.

'Has Father said anything about my note?' asked Stanley, as they went to the house.

'No, I have not seen him. I rather think that he went out early this morning, but perhaps he will be in soon. I am sure when he has heard what you have discovered this morning, he will not mind our going into the Manor grounds,' said Joan.

'You are early worms,' said Aunt Eliza, meeting them in the hall at that moment.

'We have been out to look for Jinks, Auntie,' said Jim. 'Has Father got home yet?' he added.

'No, and he does not expect to be home till to-morrow,' said their aunt; adding, as she noticed the surprise on their faces, 'Did you not know that he had been sent for?'

'No, we had not heard anything about it,' said Stanley and Jim in a breath; while Joan added: 'Where has he gone, Auntie?'

'To your Uncle Fred, dear. He is very ill, and they sent a telegram asking him to go. It came while we were out last night, and it was too late to do anything then, so your father has gone this morning by the first train. He was so sorry not to see any of you to say good-bye, but when he went to your rooms you were not to be found.'

'Norah and I have been quite a long way, up by the wood,' said Joan, 'and the boys went on their bicycles.'

'Well, come and have breakfast, for it is getting cold, and then I have something that I want you to do for me,' said Aunt Eliza. She had already breakfasted with the Doctor, and now sat down to pour out the coffee and talk to the children. Stanley wanted to ask if his father had left any message for him, but he reflected that it would hardly do to take Aunt Eliza into their confidence, for she would only be alarmed if he told all that they had discovered about the new dispenser, and no good could come of it.

'I want such a lot of errands done. You will have to work hard, and the bicycles too,' said Aunt Eliza, after an interval.

The boys' hearts sank rather at this, for they particularly desired to have the morning to themselves, and this would not be possible if Aunt Eliza wanted them.

'There is a note that your father left to be taken to Dr. Wilks at Chudley,' began their aunt. 'That has to go as soon as possible, for there will be a few patients coming here to-night, and no one to attend to them if that note is not taken. And there are a few who must be visited, and Dr. Wilks said that he would help your father at any time in an emergency. So that note must go first. Then there is medicine to go in the opposite direction to Hawkins' farm. That is a good distance, is it not?'

'Yes, it is eight miles,' said Stanley, promptly.

'And I want you and Norah to go with me in the pony-carriage,' said Aunt Eliza. 'I said that I could call round at several of the places on your father's list, but unfortunately I don't know all the roads.'

'It is a bother, I know,' said Stanley, when Aunt

Eliza had left the room to give orders in the kitchen: 'but all the same it cannot be helped. No one is to blame for it, and, after all, we ought to lend a hand.'

'I know, but it is just maddening when you think that poor old Jinks is there all this time waiting to be let out of somewhere, only we don't know where, and there will not be a chance to-day to find out where he is hidden.'

'Perhaps there will this evening,' suggested Raymond, hopefully.

'Don't you believe it. We have our orders for this morning, but there will be some more for this afternoon, and this evening too. Oh! I can see us being busy all day.'

'It seems to me that getting up early does not suit you,' said Stanley. 'I think to-morrow morning will not be too late for us to see about Jinks. He is not nearly done yet, judging by that barking we heard, and we will get up early in the morning if we do not get a chance to go there again to-day.'

It was hardly possible to remain grumpy for long, for every one else was determined to make the best of things, and it only took Jim about three minutes of calm reflection to become once more his customary good-natured self.

'I say, there's time just to look at that paper before we start to find Dr. Wilks,' he said.

'Yes, let's go to the playground at once, and try to discover what it means. Auntie has not come back yet'; and accordingly they all went off by way of a back staircase.

Stanley got out the key, which was beginning to assume a rather worn appearance by this time.

'That's right; now we'll see what they are going to do this time,' said Jim.

(Continued on page 354.)

A ROMAN DINNER.

PROBABLY many of my readers have had, in school, to learn some facts about the life and history of that remarkable people, the ancient Romans. One thing we often read about—the feasts that the Romans had, especially during the time of the Empire. Sometimes these are referred to as 'dinners,' at other times as 'suppers.' The fashionable Roman gentlemen had but one principal meal daily; the rest were 'snacks,' often taken standing, it appears. Now, let us fancy we are Romans, living in Italy nineteen hundred years ago, and I will describe what we see and taste at a grand dinner party.

Before starting we have had a bath, and perfumed ourselves; then, putting on those flowing togas which we are obliged to hold up, lest the dust or dirt of the streets should cling to them, we are escorted by slaves to our host's door, and put upon our heads a wreath or crown of flowers. In we go, taking care to put the right foot foremost, for to enter with the left foot would be thought unlucky. The large room is lighted by a huge lustre or lamp, upon which is depicted the movement of the sun, moon, and stars. Couches, richly decorated, are on three sides of the square table; the other side is left open. Our host bows, but does not offer his hand, and we take the

places pointed out to us, not sitting, but reclining upon the couch—rather an awkward position for eating. You see the two persons standing at the side of the table which has no couch. These are not visitors, but carvers. The napkins are not laid upon the table, the slaves bring these to us; they have a broad purple border.

Look at the huge centre-piece, piled high with olives, prunes, and pomegranates. All are assembled, and the head of the house mutters something, perhaps a grace, or a few words of general welcome. Swiftly the attendants come in with the first course—a pudding placed upon a sort of gridiron, and smoking hot. Ah! what are they bringing in, too? Little animals, seasoned with honey and red juice; surely, these are mice of some sort; they make you shudder, but you are not obliged to partake. The puddings are not bad, though they may spoil your appetite for other dishes. Rather a singular dish is the next one: it is a fowl surrounded by eggs, or what seem to be eggs. We are invited to take one. See! the egg is no real egg; it contains a small favourite bird called the ortolan, coated with pastry.

Did you hear that click? There, in the middle of the table, a trap-door has opened, and dishes are coming from below, seven or eight at least. Several represent signs of the Zodiac. There is mutton for Aries, beef for Taurus, crabs for Cancer, and so on. A hare has wings fastened to it. This is to remind us of Pegasus, the magic winged horse. Those figures of satyrs contain sauce to pour over the fish.

Prepare for the last course, which, however, comes in chiefly for show. Four slaves bear in a huge wild boar; on his tusks are two baskets containing fruit. Music is the signal that the dessert is coming in—plenty of fruit and cakes strongly flavored with saffron. If you do not care to stop and see the Egyptian dancers, we may depart. J. R. S. C.

THE HOUSE IN THE WALL.

WHO is this that comes a-roaming,
Soft and shadowy in the gloaming?

'Pray, sir,' answered Mrs. Mouse,
'Step into my little house.
I have babies, one, two, three,
In their cradles you shall see.
Don't be shy, you're not too tall,
Come, my front door's in the wall.'
What a dainty room within,
Clean and shining as a pin!
Said Mrs. Mouse, 'You'll take some tea:
The table is just laid for three,
And soon my husband will return;
Meanwhile I'll make the fire burn.'
She stirred a night-light flickering low,
Until it gave a cheerful glow,
Then on it set her little pot,
And soon the water bubbled hot.
'The children are all fast asleep;
'Pray, sir,' said Mousie, 'take a peep.
I turned, and by the fire next spied
Three walnut shells set side by side,
All cradling, snug as snug could be,
The babies tucked up cosily.

In quilt of spider's web wrapped round,
 Each mousiekin slept safe and sound.
 While over them was written that
 'Good children must Beware the Cat!'
 Just then the front door opened wide,
 And Mr. Mousie stepped inside.
 'I'm late, my love, I fear, to-day.
 What's this? a guest? present me, pray!
 Delighted, sir! you'll stay to tea?
 That's right! but first you both must see
 A birthday present I have bought,
 For my dear wife, with loving thought,
 A portrait of our gracious King,
 The latest too, and just the thing,
 To fix upon the parlour wall,
 Where it may be admired by all!'
 Then Mrs. Mouse cried, 'Oh, you dear!
 I'm sure he'll look quite lovely there!
 A splendid painting! light the lamp.'
 (King George was just a postage stamp!)
 A cotton reel stood ready spread
 With toasted cheese and crumbs of bread,
 And when the pot was boiling quite,
 Each one sat down with appetite.
 By friendly word and kindly jest.
 The pair made me a welcome guest.
 Then, when the hour for parting struck,
 We all shook hands and wished good luck!

Away I hurried from the house,
 Of kindly little Mr. Mouse,
 And from a corner of my room
 Took something hidden in the gloom,
 A wooden box, with bars of steel,
 Within which hung a tempting meal!
 I broke the walls and bent the wire,
 And threw the mouse-trap in the fire!

W. Radcliff.

THE HOME WORKSHOP.

II.—A SIMPLE LATHE AND HOW TO MAKE IT.

SOON or late to every boy engaged in model-making there comes the desire to possess a lathe. He feels handicapped without one, and a lathe is a rather expensive tool to buy—beyond many pockets! In the following article will be found instructions which, if carefully followed, should enable any ingenious boy, with some experience of wood tools, to build a small lathe.

This machine is of course limited in its capabilities, but when we consider its cheapness and the simplicity of its construction, the accuracy of the work that can be turned out is somewhat surprising. Actually we can turn wood up to three inches diameter by about fifteen inches long, and discs in wood up to five inches in diameter, and even small brass-work for model engines and other purposes. It is a type of lathe much used in the East for turning the beautiful objects in ivory and wood to be seen in our museums; and it is worked on the same principle as the small lathes, known as 'Watchmakers' Turns,' used up to the last part of the nineteenth century, that principle being that the work to be turned should rotate between two fixed centres.

With the exception of a few bolts and nuts, practically the whole machine is of wood. Fig. 1 is a side view of the lathe and fig. 2 a front view: the whole of the stand can be made of soft wood, white pine or deal; the headstock and tailstock, tool-rest, &c., should preferably be of some harder wood.

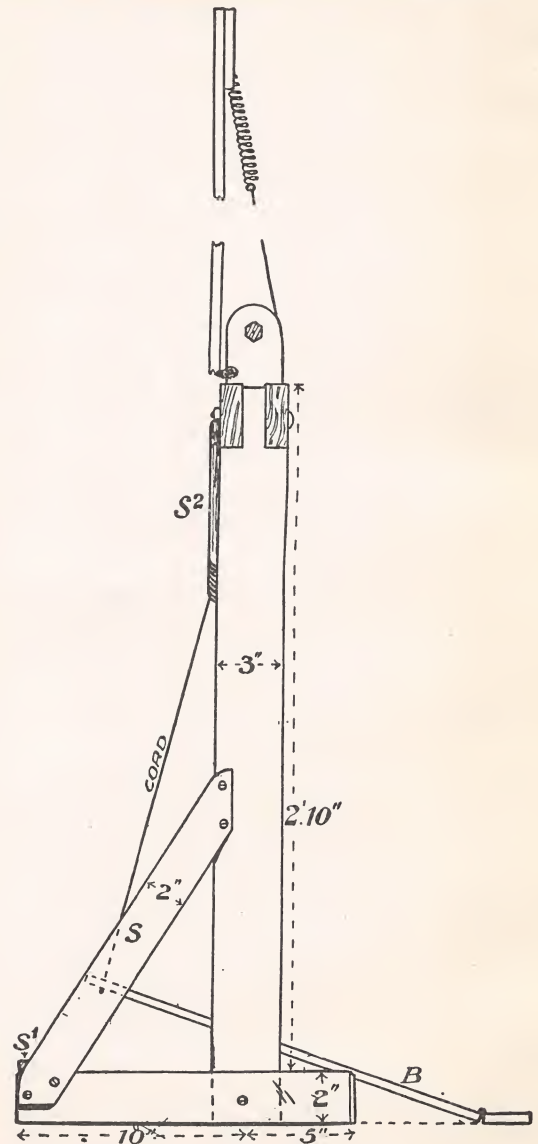


Fig. 1.

The main principle of a lathe is that an object whirling round rapidly and evenly can cut or be cut by another object held firmly against it. If you spin a piece of wood evenly on its axis and put a sharp point steadily against it in the same place, you will cut an even groove in the wood. So what you have to do is to make a device for whirling the piece

of wood round, while at the same time you keep your tool pressed in the right place.

First, then, you want to get a 'bed,' or resting-place for your 'work'—the piece of wood to be shaped—and a support to hold each end of it while it spins round. These supports are called the headstock (close to the left-hand upright in fig. 2) and the tailstock (on the right hand in fig. 2): the horizontal portion in the same figure is the 'bed.' The headstock is fixed, the tailstock movable—the 'locking nut' tightens the tailstock when the work is adjusted.

Next, before considering in detail how to make these vital parts of the lathe, you must decide how you are going to get your 'power'—i.e., how you are going to make the work rotate. You have only two hands, and you will want them for the tools you are to press against the work (at the sort of bracket in the middle of the 'bed' in fig. 2). You must work a pulley or wheel by means of a treadle (see figs. 1 and 2 b). The old way to do this used to be to hang a long ash pole by a hinge from a roof beam to the treadle: this forced the treadle back into position when the pressure of the foot on it was taken off, but it is rather clumsy and inconvenient. Another way is to have a cord running up to the bottom of the bed, through a hole, and down again to a large weight: this also forces the treadle up into place again after the foot-pressure is removed. The best way of all, however, is to use a simple stout spring like that shown in figs. 1 and 2. The treadle thus causes the pulley to spin, and the pulley is engaged to a 'carrier' which holds the work, and so the work rotates with it. If the spring used in our plan can be hung from a hook in the rafters, the upright and cross piece will be unnecessary, which is a great saving of trouble.

In building the lathe we will begin with the stand. The two uprights and their two feet (both alike) are made from three by two-inch wood, the uprights being three feet long and the feet fifteen inches. Five inches from the front of each foot, and in the three-inch side, a mortice is cut three inches by one inch, centrally (see dotted lines, fig. 1). A tenon two inches long is cut at the bottom of each upright to fit tightly in these mortices. A single screw in each should be sufficient to fix the joints. Before fixing, however, cut the top of the uprights to the shape shown in fig. 1; these top tenons go between the cheeks of the bed, and are three inches long by one inch thick. Before cutting these tenons and mortices, carefully rule pencil lines squarely on all faces of the wood as guides to cutting; firmness and therefore success depend on care in these little matters. One side of the bed must be exactly level with the other, and the uprights must be accurately at right angles to the feet. Fix the uprights to the feet and cut the stays (s s in figs. 1 and 2) from, say, two by one inch thick wood, and about eighteen inches long; they are halved in thickness when fixed (see figs. 1 and 2). These stays should be held in place and there marked where they are to be cut. Fix the stays and see that both standards are exactly alike.

Obtain for the bed two pieces of wood (preferably hard, but this is not imperative) three inches by one inch and two feet three inches long (if of soft wood perhaps it would be as well to increase the thickness to, say, one and a quarter inches). These are fixed as

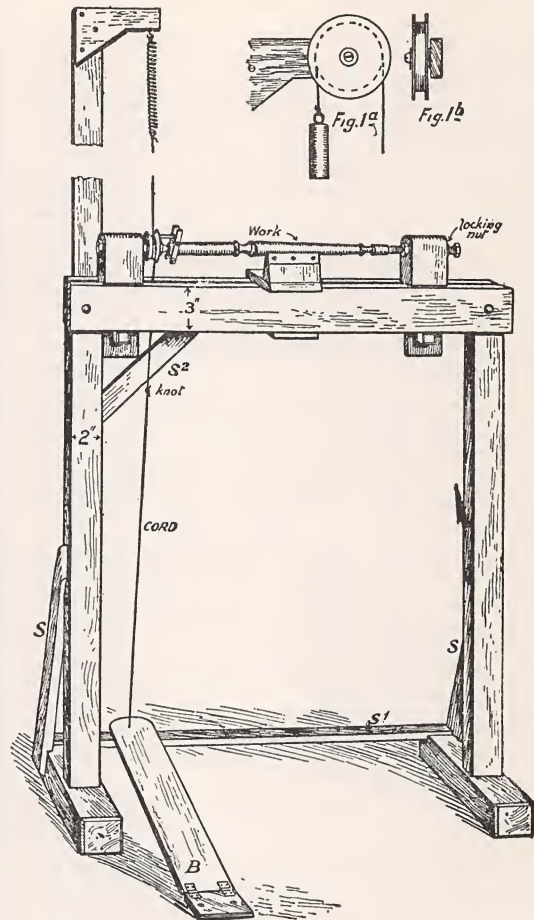


Fig. 2.

in figs. 1 and 2, being held in place by one five-sixteenths inch or three-eighths inch bolt at each end. These bolts are three and a half inches long for a bed made of one-inch wood and four inches long for a bed of the thicker wood. A washer should be put under the nut when tightening up; the holes for the bolts can be bored with a brace and bit.

Hold the standards upright and fix the bed. Next cut the stay (s 1, fig. 2) of, say, two inch by one inch stuff of such length as will keep the standards the same distance apart at the bottom as at the top; this length can be obtained by measuring. The stay is fixed by halving the ends and screwing. The frame will require one more stay to give it 'lateral'—sideways—rigidity. This stay (s 2 in figs. 1 and 2) can be of similar wood to the others, and about twelve to fifteen inches long. It is fixed by halving and screwing. In halving the stays the cross saw-cut must be of such angle as to fit closely up to the wood to which it is fixed. The upper face of the bed should have a plane run over it, to make it quite level and smooth.

(Concluded on page 356.)

QUACKS OF OLD ENGLAND.

MANY and varied, and often amusing, are the sights of London streets: no wonder, considering what an immense city it is. Along the great thoroughfares, the police are always on the look-out to disperse even a small crowd, but in by-streets we frequently see a group of persons, young and old, standing round a man who is trying to sell something. We still come upon the street quack, who is with earnestness recommending to people his wonderful remedy, for corns, for headache, for rheumatism, or some other common trouble. The price of the article differs: it may be only a penny, seldom more than sixpence. But I doubt if this street dealer in drugs does so well now as formerly he did. Many magazines of our day have articles or notes on health and disease, so that the public generally get knowledge about these matters and are not so easily taken by the noisy talk of a man praising some marvellous remedy, as our ancestors may have been. If we look back to days when few could read or write, we find the travelling quack or doctor very successful indeed, for people knew little about drugs, and believed their powers were increased by the moon and the stars and by magic.

During the Middle Ages of England, shops were few, and people sold and bought many things along the roads or streets. Even now peddlers and costermongers do a good trade, but not so good as they did a few hundred years ago.

The quack of the olden time often tried to impress people by his own appearance, which is seldom a trick of the street doctors we now see. He wore a fantastic robe of some sort, adorned with mysterious letters, or he had a curious and brightly coloured headdress. A favourite device of this quack was to pretend he did not go about on his own account, but was sent into the country by some nobleman or rich lady, who had somehow discovered a marvellous remedy, and wanted the world to have the benefit of it. Occasionally, these quacks would refuse to take money of the poor, but then they often succeeded in getting large sums from the rich. The story was told of marvellous cures wrought by the articles, and also how those plants and drugs were increased in value by the curious processes they went through. These wanderers did great business at the many fairs in towns and villages common in the olden times. J. R. S. C.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

By William Rainey.

(Continued from page 340.)

MEANWHILE, for the present they were safe; but what of the dervishes? Checked by the catastrophe in the Rock Temple, had they abandoned the search? Had their superstitious fears been aroused so that they would not again approach the place, or had they concluded that fugitives and pursuers had perished together?

The refugees asked themselves these questions, but there was no answer to them. They must remain hidden through the daylight and keep a sharp lookout to see if the enemy appeared. Dick posted himself at

the opening in the front of the chamber with Uncle Charlie's glasses. By keeping well to one side and lying on his chest he was quite out of sight from below, and looking obliquely he could obtain a view of the strips of sand that were still uncovered in the direction of the ravine, although from the bending westward of the precipitous cliffs, the ravine could not be seen. Dick scanned these sandy causeways for signs of moving figures, but none appeared. They decided to take turns at this point of observation throughout the day, meanwhile discussing Selim's plan of escape.

Selim's plan was this—when darkness fell he should descend the rope, and, selecting the shallowest water, wade the three miles to the head of Crocodile Creek where the felucca lay. He had made careful examination of the water from the Scribe's chamber. The shallow tracts could easily be distinguished in daylight; in fact, in the neighbourhood of the tower the bottom was distinctly visible, although at a distance this, naturally, was not the case. He had noted fairly well the directions the ridges of higher ground took, and, standing at the opening, he could point out a safe course. True, at night, it might be difficult to keep the course, but he thought that by noting it well in daylight, and then in the evening taking the position of the stars, he could avoid the deep water, and with a pole to sound the depths, it would be quite safe. He would then get out the felucca, which lay concealed among the rushes. With the Professor's glasses they could make out its nose among the reeds, and saw that it was afloat.

Selim reckoned that it would take him about three hours. If Dick and Harry went with him they might be able to get the sail up and do it in less, but they would have to be very careful to avoid getting on a sandbank, as there would be difficulty in getting her floated. By using the sail they would avoid the noise of the oars in the rowlocks, which was a consideration, as such a noise would travel a long way on the water if the night were still, and might prove disastrous if any dervishes were within hearing. When they had got the felucca beneath the tower, they could go through the temple, mount the zig-zag to the tower roof, and get the windlass to work. In this way it would be easy to let down the treasure chest into the boat, and using the sling, and in the same way, they could lower the Professor without injury to his disabled leg. Should all work well and no hitch occur, they would be half-way down the creek toward the Nile by daylight.

The chief dangers lay in wading in the darkness the three miles between the tower and the head of Crocodile Creek, and the risk of running aground on returning. As the day went on and the water continued to rise, the latter danger would be lessened, but the former increased: to meet this, Dick proposed that they should tie themselves together with a fair length of rope, in the way adopted by Alpine climbers, so that if one slipped into deep water, the others could pull him out. They had no spare rope in the chamber, but he remembered that there was a coil on the tower roof: they could creep up when darkness fell, and secure it.

About mid-day Harry gave the alarm from the lookout where he was posted. First one dervish was seen,

then three appeared where the rocks jutted out near the ravine. Later on more were seen, till there was a score on the strip of ground going in the direction of the Rock Temple; it was plain that the dervishes had still to be taken into account. The Professor and his party were tolerably safe in their present position; they had drawn up the rope that hung down the tower-side and stowed it away in the chamber, and there was nothing that could attract observation but the opening itself, which would pass as a break in the wall—the result of time. The other tower had several such fissures. There was still the rope running upward from the opening to the windlass, but this would be scarcely noticeable at a short distance, and the windlass barely projected above the coping. There was more to be feared from the possibility of their finding the passage. If any of the dervishes who had been in the forefront of the assault on the hiding-place had escaped they were aware of its existence, or if any of those whom they had just seen dared venture far into the Rock Temple they would not fail to see the opening jammed with the beam. They would, however, know nothing of the secret of the iron ring; probably it would not be noticed in the gloom, and they certainly would not guess its peculiar movement. They watched till the dervishes were hidden from their view by the angle of the tower wall. Whether they entered the Rock Temple or turned in their direction could not be seen.

Taking the watch in turns, they got a little sleep that afternoon, and the time wore on till nightfall, when they sat waiting for the setting of the moon, as the two boys had done the night before. The missionary, who was something of a doctor, had dressed the wound on Dick's head. It was nothing serious, but he declared, as medical men will, that Dick must rest, and proposed that he should take Dick's place in the expedition to bring up the felucca; and protested that he had been the lame dog all along—that everything had been done for him, and that it was high time he took an active part for the general welfare—that Dick must remain behind with the Professor to guard the fortress, especially as they had seen that the dervishes were still on the war-path. In fact, now the 'Man of Mystery' had found an interpreter and could make his voice heard in the councils, he was in a mild way becoming quite self-assertive. The last argument prevailed most with Dick, and he consented to remain behind.

When the moon had set, the three slid down the rope and stood beneath the tower. Having fastened themselves together with the rope, leaving a couple of yards between each, Selim led the way with a long stick to probe the depths, and darkness swallowed them up.

It would be little less than three hours before they could expect Selim's return; no light was allowed in the chamber, and the Professor tried to get a little sleep. Dick drew up the rope and sat himself down to keep watch. An hour passed. He could hear by his regular breathing that Uncle Charlie was asleep. All was still outside: now and again a puff of wind caught the side of the opening and stirred the air within. The night sky was luminous with stars; the constellation of the Great Bear stood on its head. Closing his eyes, he went over all the details of their

preparations for flight—how best to secure the chest for lowering into the boat; it was weighty, it was long; one sling was not enough, it must have two, and a stick across the bottom to keep them apart, and a cord round the box and made fast to the rope to keep it from slipping. Five of them and that heavy box would make the boat low in the water—water so shallow too—must keep the weight out of the bows. He found himself dozing, pulled himself together, and went through the preparations again. Wind is in the south—what there is of it: that would serve all right till they fetched Crocodile Creek—must get out oars—don't make noise. He was dozing again, and his head was sunk on his hand. Now he was flying through the darkness with Abdulla beside him, and now they were turned to face their pursuers. Abdulla's spear was thrusting this way and that, his revolver was jammed and would not fire. He started up awake—a figure was before him in the opening—a dark, lithe figure silhouetted against the sky—a figure hanging by the rope and in the act of swinging himself within the chamber.

For a fraction of a second he thought, in his still dreamy state, that it was Abdulla. The figure was within and bent forward peering into the gloom—the rope behind was still swinging. The man's eyes, as yet unaccustomed to the darkness within, had not made out the seated figure. His arms and legs were stretched wide, and beneath his left arm a sword was slung. Dick sprang forward at one bound, and struck out straight—a blow on the chin that made the man stagger, but the dervish was on him before he could get his left well out. Two great bony hands tried to clutch his throat, but Dick's head was down, and they only gripped his face and head. Dick had the advantage of having got in the first telling blow, and of being able to see his adversary clear against the light. They were too close linked for the dervish to be able to draw his weapon, he threw all his weight on Dick to crush the boy to the ground, but Dick slipped nimbly sideways and saved himself; he gripped his opponent by the arms and flung the man sideways from him across his leg—it was Dick's only trick. The dervish fell against the broken side of the opening—the stones flew out and man and stones shot into space—one instant gripping, struggling like a falling cat to right itself, then disappeared—a horrible thud below, and a rattle of stones, and all was still. Dick had thrown himself backward on the floor and lay panting.

In deadly silence the two had gripped each other—there was no sound till the man's body burst the wall; then Uncle Charlie started up to see stones and the figure of the dervish, with wide-flung arms, disappear; he sprang forward, forgetting his injured leg, which gave way beneath him, and he fell beside Dick on the floor.

Dick was not hurt, but dazed by the suddenness of the encounter and its quick, tragic ending. Uncle Charlie gripped his hand, saying earnestly, 'Thank God, you are all right, Dick; you are a brave lad.'

Nothing more was said; they sat in silence in the dark chamber looking out on the night sky, full of their own thoughts and emotions, and fervently praying that no mischance had befallen the others.

(Continued on page 358.)



“The stones flew out, and man and stones shot into space.”



"They made up their minds at once that this was the man."

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 347.)

THE message was longer than the others they had found, but it was easy to read with the aid of the key, and they quickly deciphered the words: 'Have found another paper. Place found wrong. Will come to surgery to-night, so be ready to take it. Say where to meet.'

'Now we shall have to look out for him this evening. I wonder what he will do. Will he come and pretend that he wants some medicine?' asked Norah, laughing, when they had all read the message and discussed it.

'I suppose he is coming so as to be able to give Herr Scharf the new paper that he has found,' said Raymond. 'I suppose he cannot go to the place where he lodges.'

'For the matter of that, he could come to the surgery and ask to see the dispenser. No one would think anything of that,' said Stanley. 'But we shall see to-night—that is, if we are here at the time.'

The afternoon was as full of work as the morning had been, and in the evening the three boys had one more errand to do, though the two girls remained at home, and received strict injunctions to keep a sharp look-out for the man from the Manor.

'But as we have never seen him, I shall not be surprised if we don't recognise him,' said Norah.

'Well, do your best. I don't suppose you will miss him if he does come,' said Jim. 'And Joan at least knows all the regular patients, so she will be able to spot a new-comer.'

The girls betook themselves to the garden, and became exceedingly busy in a part Joan that decided required weeding, from which they had a good view of the drive.

'Now, if he comes to the surgery we cannot fail to see him,' she said, selecting the place, and setting to work with great zeal. 'I often do a little gardening, so nothing will be thought of it, and if that man comes we had better one of us go to the surgery for something, and then we shall see if he has gone inside.'

Dr. Wilks had by this time driven over, and was now attending to those of Dr. Railton's patients who had already arrived to consult him. Herr Scharf, too, was in the surgery, busily dispensing medicine.

The two girls worked away, but never forgot to watch the drive, and presently they had the satisfaction of seeing a stranger coming towards them. He wore a black-and-white check cap, and they made up their minds at once that this was the man for whom they were looking.

'I will wait a moment, and then I will go and ask if Mrs. Brown's medicine is ready,' said Joan, when the man had passed by, and had taken the path that led to the surgery. 'Then I can see if he is really inside and seeing the doctor.'

She went on with her work for a moment or two, and then, telling Norah that she would come there for her on her return, she went to the surgery and knocked on the door. Herr Scharf opened it, and Joan saw that the strange man was indeed inside, and evidently waiting to see the Doctor.

'Is Mrs. Brown's medicine ready?' asked Joan, in a clear voice. 'I am going into the village, and I can take it.'

'I will get it,' said the dispenser; and, turning, he stepped back into the room, and returned a moment later with the bottle of medicine.

Joan had to go away then, but she had seen what she wanted to. The stranger from the Manor was actually waiting to see the doctor, but from what they knew about him it was clear that it was not the doctor, but Herr Scharf whom he had really called there to see.

'I wish that I could have stayed and heard what they said to each other,' said Joan, when Norah and she were walking down the village street. 'But of course that was impossible. Oh! I do hope that the boys will find Jinks to-morrow; and I do wonder what all this mystery is about.'

But, had Joan realised it, they were very near to the solution of the mystery even then—very much nearer than any of them could possibly have foreseen.

CHAPTER XI.

THE two girls delivered the medicine, and had turned to go home when Norah made a suggestion. 'Why not go to the wood and look at that tree the boys saw Herr Scharf measuring from the other night?' said she.

'We might. It won't be dark for some time yet,' agreed Joan. 'But you remember the message that Jim found this morning.'

'About its being the wrong place? Yes, but it may not be this tree that was meant. And anyway it would be rather fun to go and have a look at it,' said Norah, who was rather unusually fond of adventures, and had felt very sorry that none had come her way so far.

'Very well, let's go. I don't think there is anything else that Auntie will want done to-day. What a rush it has been! I am glad that Father does not often get called away in a hurry.'

'Is it an uncle of yours that he has gone to see?' inquired Norah, as together they climbed the hill that was bordered on one side by the grounds of the Manor and on the other side by the wood.

'He is a great-uncle of ours, and an uncle of father's. We have none of us ever seen him. He is very old and cantankerous, but he is fond of father, and always sends for him if he is ill,' replied Joan.

They entered the wood by the little path, along which the man from the Manor had passed the other night on his way to meet Herr Scharf.

'What will you do if there is some one there?' asked Joan, who was not quite so courageous as Norah.

'I shall not do anything. We have as much right to go into the wood as any one else,' she replied. 'No one will know that we have any particular reason for coming. And Herr Scharf will not be there, for, as you know, he is busy in the surgery, and is likely to be kept there for some time yet.'

'Oh! I am not afraid of meeting him; but there is the other man,' said Joan.

'Well, it will not matter if he is there. We need not take any notice of him. We can just pass on as if we have only come for a walk.'

By this time they had reached the clearing where stood the gnarled oak-tree.

'Now, I think I remember the number of feet,' said Norah. 'We will measure, and that will bring us to the spot that they marked with a stone. I will measure if you will keep count.'

They went to the trunk of the tree, and then, facing due south Norah commenced to measure the distance as

they had been told by the boys that Herr Scharf had done. They made one or two mistakes, and at the last had to take to searching for the stones, discarding the measuring of distances; but in time their efforts met with success, and Norah, who was in front of Joan, exclaimed in surprise:

'Why, look, some one has been here digging!'

Both girls pressed forward then to get a closer view, and found that Norah was right. Some one had been there digging, though he had tried to remove all traces of his work before he left it.

There was a small clearing where the stones had been put by Herr Scharf, and here in this space were signs that some person had been digging recently. Quite a lot of earth had been thrown up, as though a deep hole about three feet in diameter had been made. This earth had afterwards been replaced, and turfs and moss laid over the hole to hide all traces of the work, but this did not deceive the girls, whose sharp eyes at once detected the disturbed condition of the soil, and also the brown stain on the grass where the pile of earth had been thrown up.

'I wonder what the hole was made for, and why it was filled up again?' said Norah, kneeling down and removing some of the mossy turf with her hands. It was loose, not having been planted properly, and unless rain were to fall in a day or two would certainly die.

Joan shuddered.

'It looks awfully as though something had had to be buried,' she said in a low tone. 'It gives me the creeps, Norah. Have you seen enough, because I think we ought to go home now?'

'Oh, wait a moment or two. What do you mean about it looking as though something had been buried? Do you mean a treasure, or stolen things, or something of that kind?'

'No, I didn't,' replied Joan, truthfully, though she felt rather ashamed of having to confess what she had really thought. 'I meant something dead.'

'Oh!' responded Norah slowly, though there was not the touch of fear in her tones that Joan had expected there would be. 'I don't think that is the explanation of it. I think whoever dug this hole was either looking for something, or else wanted to hide something that he had no right to have in his possession. I rather wonder if Herr Scharf did this.'

'I suppose he or that other man must have done it,' said Joan. 'And perhaps they are coming here again later on, and then they will try in another spot. That makes it look as though they are trying to find something. I was thinking of that message, you know, about its having been the wrong place.'

'Yes, I know,' replied Norah. 'Listen, what is that?'

They waited a moment in silence, and as they did so there came the sounds as of some one coming towards them through the wood.

(Continued on page 366.)

THE ARM BEHIND THE SWORD.

A STORY from ancient history tells of a certain captain whose banner was always foremost in the fight, and whose sword was dreaded by his enemies because it was to them the herald of slaughter and defeat. The king once asked to see this famous sword,

of which he had heard so much. Having examined it, he sent it back to the captain with these words: 'I see nothing wonderful in this sword, which is like other swords. I cannot imagine why any man should fear it.'

The captain's reply to this was: 'Your Majesty has been pleased to examine my sword, but I did not send the arm that wields it. If you could examine *that*, and the heart that guides the arm, you would learn the secret of my sword's success.'

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

11.—CHARADE.

1. Water, wind, or steam I need,
Then I do good work indeed;
Coffee, paper, bread need me
Ere they can begin to be.
If you're caught in me you'll find
Very little left behind.

2. Counted of great bulk by some,
Made by others deaf and dumb;
Often in the background cast,
Reckoned as the least and last:
Yet, when all is said and done,
Most believe it number one.

3. Now a preposition find:
When you place, or when you bind,
When you make beginning true,
When you sight a noble view,
When you mark a special day—
Then this word perhaps you'll say.

Reckon up a number vast,

You will have my whole at last.

C. J. B.

(Answer on page 387.)

ANSWER TO RHYMED CHARADE ON PAGE 323.

Pan-to-mime.

FLOWERS AND WEEDS.

EACH day is like a plot of ground,
That may with flowers or weeds abound,
Bright blossoms making gay sweet bowers,
Or hurtful weeds that choke the flowers.

The weeds are anger, hate, and pride,
And many an evil thing beside:
Things that unlovely are to see,
That fill the ground where flowers might be.

The flowers are gentleness and peace,
Kind words that make all strife to cease;
And gentle thoughts within the mind,
That bloom in actions sweet and kind.

If weeds within my days abound,
How rank will be this plot of ground;
How dark, unlovely be the view,
That might be gay with loveliest hue.

O may my days with good be fair,
Kind deeds like roses blossom there.
And graces, each a lovely thing,
Make of the year one long sweet spring.

THE BELL-RINGING STATUE.

AT Sluis, in Holland, there stands in the steeple near the bells a statue which, by mechanical means, does duty as a clock by striking, at regular intervals, a bell with a hammer.

This bell-ringing statue has a very interesting history. It was originally set up in honour of Jantje van Sluis, who (accidentally, it is true) saved his town from the enemy.

Jantje was a bellringer and a watchman, in whose time the eighty years' war with Spain was going on. On the night of June 12th, 1606, a Spanish captain, named Du Terrail, attempted to get back Sluis, the chief fortress of Zeeland, which, two years before, had been taken by Prince Maurice of Orange. The plan was that when the clock struck nine the Spanish soldiers should sound a false alarm at one gate, with the object of drawing the Dutch soldiers away from another, by which the Spaniards would then enter.

The plan failed. For on that very evening Jantje, who had been enjoying the delights of Sluis Fair, forgot to wind up the town clock until a later hour than usual, and then he performed his task so hastily and carelessly that somehow he put the works out of order. Du Terrail listened in vain for the striking of the clock. The attack was put off until midnight, and, before that hour arrived, the suspicions of the garrison were aroused. Consequently, the Dutchmen were on the alert, and the Spaniards were repulsed.

A 'LONG DOG.'

A 'LONG DOG.' That is the old name for a greyhound—the dog which every one admires. It seems to have been, in olden times, an especial pet and favourite of great ladies. We are told that Robert Bruce's wife, when a prisoner of Edward the First, in 1304, had three men and three women servants, plenty of game and fish, *three greyhounds*, and the 'fairest house in the manor.'

Later, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, we find the 'long dog' numbered amongst the 'king's beastes,' which were 'the lion, the dragon, the antelope, the greyhound, and the dun cow.'

According to an old Welsh or British saying, 'A gentleman is known by his horse, his hawk, and his greyhound.'

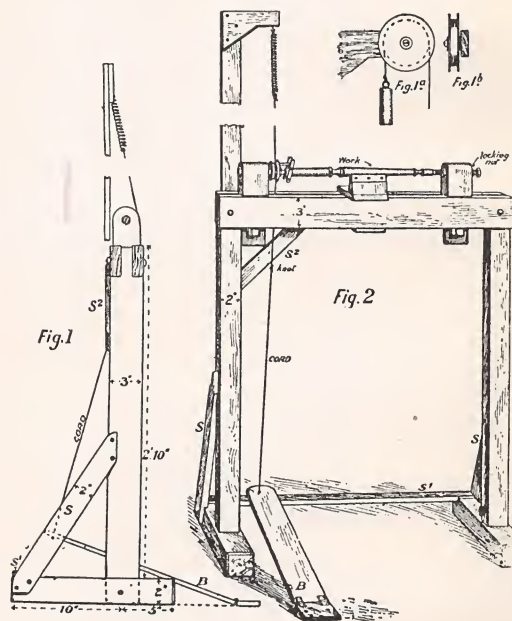
THE HOME WORKSHOP.

II.—A SIMPLE LATHE AND HOW TO MAKE IT.

WE can now proceed with the head and tail stocks. (See figs. 1 and 2, which are repeated here on a smaller scale for convenience of reference.) These are exactly alike, and are made of two and a half inch by two and a half inch hard wood. Fig. 3 shows how to mark off the wood. The shading indicates the wood to be removed. Mark off everything perfectly square and with centre lines. Fig. 4 shows the finished part, and gives the dimensions; the tongue-piece which goes between the cheeks of the bed should be a bare inch in thickness to enable it to slide freely. The hole at the top is of half an inch diameter, and should be carefully bored with a centre bit, boring from both sides; this hole takes the fixed spindle (fig. 5). The square

hole in the tongue piece is one inch by one inch, and is for the wedge to hold the head down to the bed; the position of this hole is indicated by dimensions in fig. 4. A screw seen in this figure is to prevent any tendency of the heads to split when being wedged to the bed. Fig. 8 shows one of the wedges, of which two are required; leave them a little fuller than the dimensions shown, as they can only be finally adjusted by trial, and once you have cut away wood you cannot replace it.

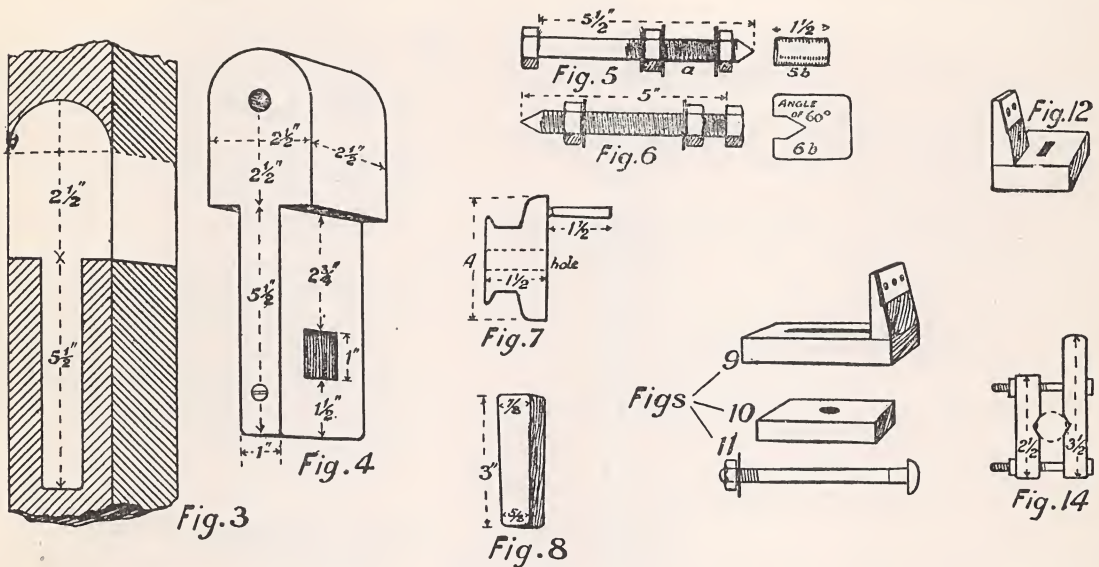
Figs. 5 and 6 are the two spindles with the necessary nuts and washers. The spindles are of half an inch diameter. If we can get a friend who has a lathe to make these spindles for us of steel and to harden the centres (points) we shall do well; but if not, we must do the best we can ourselves as follows: obtain from an ironmonger two half-inch bolts, one five and a half inches long (all these bolt lengths are from under the head of the bolts to the end), and having a screw thread



up to within two and a quarter inches of the head; the other bolt should be five inches long with the screw right up to the head. The ironmonger will be able to screw these bolts to the required distances; in addition we shall require four nuts and five washers as in figs. 5 and 6.

Next, with a file make centres (points) to these two bolts as seen in the two figures, being careful to have the points central with the stem of the bolts; the centres must have an angle of sixty degrees, and a templet or gauge of thin tin (fig. 6 b) will assist us in filing them; finish off smooth and with a good point and as true a cone as you can.

Having made the centres to our satisfaction, or at any rate to the best of our ability, we must harden them. Now you cannot harden iron as you can steel, by heating and sudden cooling in water, and as our bolts are iron we must convert the points into steel: to do this we must adopt a process known to engineers as case-hardening.



ing, this is actually transforming the surface of the iron to a slight depth into steel which we can harden. Obtain a quite small quantity of powdered *yellow* prussiate of potash (the potassium ferrocyanide of the chemist) and put it in a tin; heat in a clear fire the end of the bolt to a bright cherry red, holding the bolt in a pair of tongs; dip the point in the potash, keeping it moving about; when the redness has cooled repeat the process of heating and dipping, and finally reheat and quench in clean water. Treat both bolts in the same way. The centres will then have a thin skin of hardened steel; they must, however, be used with care and not be subject to blows. They will last a considerable time, especially for wood-turning, and if at any time they become blunt you can soften them by heating and

The pulley (fig. 7, sectional view from the side) should be of hard wood, and should have a hole in it, which is a running fit on the piece of tube; it should be of the dimensions shown, and not more than an inch and a half in diameter where the driving-cord passes over it; the dimension *A* in fig. 7 can be anything up to five inches; a useful size would be about three inches. We can make a pulley to suit ourselves exactly when we have the lathe working; temporarily we must improvise one from, say, a cotton reel, with a flange, to carry the driving-arm glued and pinned to it. The driving-arm is a stout iron screw with the head filed off, and also the point where it projects (be careful not to split the wood when screwing in). The length of the screw from the wood should be about one and a half inches, as shown.

Fig. 9 illustrates the tool-rest. This is made of a piece of five-eighths-inch thick hard wood, three inches wide by four inches long for the base, with a three-eighths-inch wide slot, cut as shown, to within three-quarters of an inch of either end. Fixed to this by three screws from beneath is a piece of the five-eighths-inch wood, bevelled as seen, bringing the total height of the rest up to two and a quarter inches. Three screws hold a piece of sheet iron at the top for the tools to slide on; this is better than the bare wood, but is a refinement that may be omitted if the rest is of hard wood; if it is omitted, see that the grain of the wood runs parallel to the top of the rest.

To clamp the rest to the bed a five-sixteenths-inch iron bolt (fig. 11), four and a half inches long, passes through a three by three inches piece of half-inch wood (fig. 10), under the bed, and up between the bed, and through the slot in the rest, where it is fixed with a nut and a washer; the slot in the rest is to admit of adjustment.

Another rest (fig. 12) is required when facing work such as discs in the lathe. Fig. 13 gives a bird's-eye view of a disc of wood (mounted on a mandril or spindle) being faced, the tool being supported by the rest (fig. 12). This rest is similar in all respects to that

allowing them to cool gently, file up to shape again and reharden as before.

Next fit the head and tail stocks to the bed, adjusting the wedges so that they hold firmly when driven in just flush with the front of the bed; do not use too much force with the wedges, or you may split the wood of the head and tail stocks. Put the spindle (fig. 5) in the headstock, and fix it with a nut and washer, putting the washer under the nut. Cut a piece of brass tube of such diameter as will just pass over the screw-thread of the spindle, a full inch and a half long (fig. 5 *b*). On this tube runs the pulley (fig. 7). The pulley is prevented from leaving the spindle by a washer and nut screwed tightly up against the end of the tube; this should be clear from figs. 2 and 5.

shown in fig. 9, except that the vertical part is fixed endways.

The carrier (fig. 14) is made of two pieces of five-eighths by five-eighths inch ash or other hard wood of the lengths indicated. These grip the work, as shown by the dotted circle, by means of two bolts of three-sixteenths or quarter-inch diameter. These bolts should be about three inches long; the longer piece of wood engages the 'driver.'

The treadle or footboard (B, in figs. 1 and 2) should be about twenty to twenty-two inches long, of five-eighths inch deal about five or six inches wide. It is hinged to a piece which is screwed to the floor. It should be vertically beneath the pulley, and its end should just clear the stay (s 1). The driving-cord goes through a hole in the footboard, and is joined to a piece of gut or a stout leather lace at the point marked 'knot' in fig. 2; cord would soon wear out with repeated crossing of the pulley. Where the gut or leather passes between the cheeks of the bed, the latter may require a small smooth groove in it to prevent the gut chafing.

The structure carrying the spring explains itself; it may be of the same timber as the frame stays, and it is held by screws to the back of the lathe. It must be high enough to prevent the end of the spring coming down to the pulley, when it is stretched to the utmost.

The spring should be capable of from twelve to fifteen inches stretching, and should be stiff enough to bring the treadle smartly to the top of its stroke. This means a spring probably about twenty inches long, a somewhat difficult thing to obtain; however, there is no necessity for the spring to be in one piece; in fact, two, three, or even more springs of similar strength may be joined up end to end. The springs should be about half an inch in diameter, and of steel wire of No. 15 or 16 s.w.g. (Standard Wire Gauge). A simple method, without steel springs, would be to use elastic. You can increase the strength of your elastic by increasing the number of strands; these should be tied together and suspended from the hook in the cross-piece of the back support or from the rafters above. Have the elastic long enough—say, not less than two feet when complete—and try two strands of three-sixteenths inch elastic; the lower ends, tied by cord, are of course joined to the gut or leather. The other simple method of obtaining the return stroke of the treadle, already mentioned, is to have a weight on the end of a cord which passes a pulley hung from above. Figs. 1a and 1b show the overhead pulley and weight. A stone ginger-beer bottle with shot or sand in it can be made of the required weight, which can easily be found by trial.

Having our lathe completed and rigged up, we require a few tools with which to work. These for wood-turning should consist of small gouges and chisels; the latter for turning are usually ground obliquely instead of squarely across. For metal (brass) turning, small tools, easily made from old files, are required, but these are matters beyond the scope of the present article. All work to be turned in our lathe should be made *roughly* round by means of chisels or plane before mounting between the centres, as this makes the work less hard.

One final piece of advice. Carefully mark off every piece of wood before cutting, and do everything in a workmanlike manner. Quite a multitude of operations in turning can be accomplished with our lathe, simple as it is—even the whole turning required in the manufacture of a simple steam engine.

C. GRANT KING.

LOVELY TOO.

THE rosebud grows into the rose,
And shows a lovely bloom,
Through the long summer day it glows
And sheds a sweet perfume.

The modest violet in the lane,
Is painted white and blue,
It blossoms, then it fades again—
Yet that is lovely too!

The hero's deeds are blazed abroad,
The world is told his worth,
The path of glory that he trod,
Is known through all the earth.

In some secluded country way,—
No curious eye to view,—
A child does some sweet deed one day—
Yet that is lovely too!

FRANK ELLIS.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINET.

(Continued from page 351.)

A FAINT rippling sound caused them to peer out eagerly into the darkness and strain their ears. Something moved beneath on the water—the dim shape of the felucca was distinguished with joy and thankfulness. A few whispered words to Uncle Charlie, and Dick let down the rope and descended. The water had risen to the very foot of the tower; the boat was there, and three silent figures stood in the water bringing it close under the wall.

'Is it all right?' asked Dick in a low voice.

'Horrible!' whispered Harry and shuddered. 'Here's the dead body of a man.'

'Yes,' said Dick in a dull voice. 'I threw him down. Don't say anything about it to the others.'

In the same dull tone he gave his well-thought-out directions to Harry. 'You and the missionary remain here, and when we lower the chest stow it in the stern. Then we'll lower the cork bed, Uncle couldn't sit on one of those seats with that leg of his—spread it out at the bottom of the boat, and be careful how you get him in; he can't do much for himself, and he's heavy. The missionary will understand when he sees him coming down. You'll come with me, Selim, on to the roof. You're used to going up and down the rope. You will go down to the chamber and load up, and I'll work the windlass; we shall have to do without the signal cord somehow; I didn't see it when I was up there.'

'Signal cord's all right,' whispered Selim, 'it's tucked up 'sides the wall.'

'Good,' said Dick. 'Now listen. The chest is to be lowered first, then the cork bed, and then Uncle Charlie. Do you understand?' Then he explained how Selim was to arrange the slings to form a cradle for the chest, and other details of the loading up. 'Now, come along,' he added, 'we'll go up.'

When they had crept along the water's edge for a short distance, and had turned the corner of the tower, Dick took Selim by the arm and whispered in his ear, 'Selim, you saved Uncle Charlie's life; we shall never forget it. I know you can be brave, if it is to save the Professor's life. There may be dervishes about the temple, or even on the roof. Keep close to me, I've got my revolver—there's two shots left.' Selim's under-lip quivered, but he bit it firmly as they crossed the colonnade and court of the temple, then, keeping close to the wall, waited a moment to see that all was clear, then through Harry's dark room and the great hall, and felt their way in the pitchy darkness up the zig-zag passage. They paused to listen at the corners, but all was still; upward again they went, and cautiously emerged on to the roof. There was no sign of dervishes, and Dick gave a great sigh of relief, which Selim echoed.

'Windlass is all right,' muttered Dick. 'Now, Selim, you quite understand what to do? We can't use the signal gong, a sound like that travels a long way. I tell you what I'll do: I'll tie the signal line to my wrist, then I shall feel the signals. You remember—one, lower—two, up—three, stop. Now then, you get down the rope.'

Dick crouched beside the windlass and waited. He looked round on the water, which reflected what little light there was; the stars were imaged in it like tiny candles burning clear in places but wavy and tremulous where the breeze touched the surface. The water appeared to surround the temple to its very foundations, and crouching on the roof he felt as if he were on the deck of a ship at sea. Two pulls on the signal cord. Dick turned the handle and wound up the slack rope; it tightened to a strain. One pull on his wrist, and he slowly lowered; there was a considerable weight on the rope. One, two, three—stop; the treasure chest was on board the felucca. One, two, on the cord—the ascending rope was slack. Then a light weight was lowered. 'Cork bed!' muttered Dick. The rope ascended again.

'Now for Uncle Charlie!' said Dick, tightening his lips and gripping the handle hard. One pull; slowly he lowered, seeing with his mental eye Uncle Charlie suspended in mid-air. One, two, three—stop. He wiped the perspiration from his forehead with the back of his hand; his hand shook and he found that his knees were trembling. He put on both brakes, ran to the parapet, caught the rope at the roller, and slid slowly down, looking in at the empty chamber as he passed, and in a minute was beside the boat.

The operations had taken longer than they expected, although there had been no hitch. A faint show of the dawn was in the east; it would be light in half an hour; still there must be no flurry. The boat was deeply laden, its stern was aground, but the missionary and the boys got it off, wading beside till it was well afloat in deep water. Uncle Charlie sat at the bottom of the boat, with his leg outstretched. Selim took the tiller, as he knew the channel best, the missionary stood by the sheet, and the two boys took their places in the bows with the oars, in case they grounded. To their joy, the sail was swelling with a gentle breeze from the south; they were off. No, the keel grated; they were aground at the bows. The two boys jumped out, and the felucca was off again; they bundled in over the thwarts. She was bowling along, the water gurgling at the prow.

The sail gave an exultant flap. No, it was not the sail: it was the report of a gun.

The cold light of dawn was slowly creeping over the scene, and there, almost in their course, where a sand-bank stretched from the shelving beach, a string of excited dervishes were running to cut them off, floundering through the shallow water, and along the bank.

'Keep her off, Selim, as much as you can,' shouted Dick. 'We are out of range so far.'

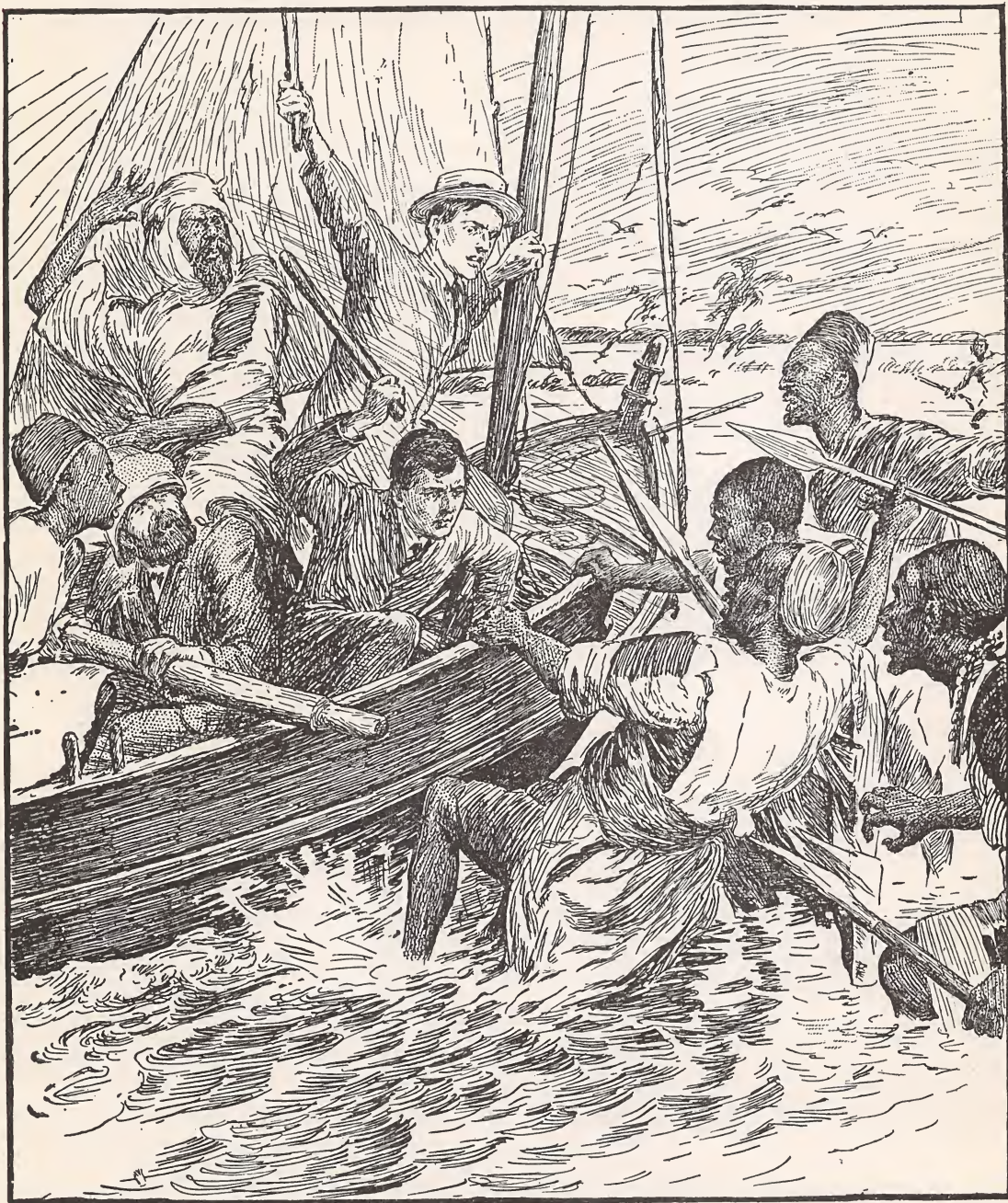
They were nearer and nearer as the boat advanced; the tribesmen waved their spears and pressed forward into the water till they were up to their waists. Selim took no notice of the dervishes, but bent almost double over the tiller, bit his under-lip, and kept his eyes fixed on the water; whatever else happened it would not do to run aground. The boat would have to pass within twenty yards of the dervishes. The wind was now fresh, and she was cutting through the water bravely. The dervishes splashed and staggered to find firm footing on the uneven bottom, and get as near as possible. They shouted and brandished their spears, while those who were armed with guns stood on the bank, reserving their fire till the boat was at its nearest. Fortunately, their arms were not of modern type, but muzzle-loaders, and they could but pour in one volley; there would be no time to reload. Those in the boat crouched under the side to get what cover they could, but Selim was exposed; he thought of nothing but the boat.

'Duck when the spears come,' shouted Dick, who held his revolver in his hand, intending to send his last two shots at the critical moment among the riflemen on the bank in the hope of disconcerting them and spoiling their aim. His thick cudgel was beside him, and Harry's was grasped in his hand to beat off any that should get near the boat.

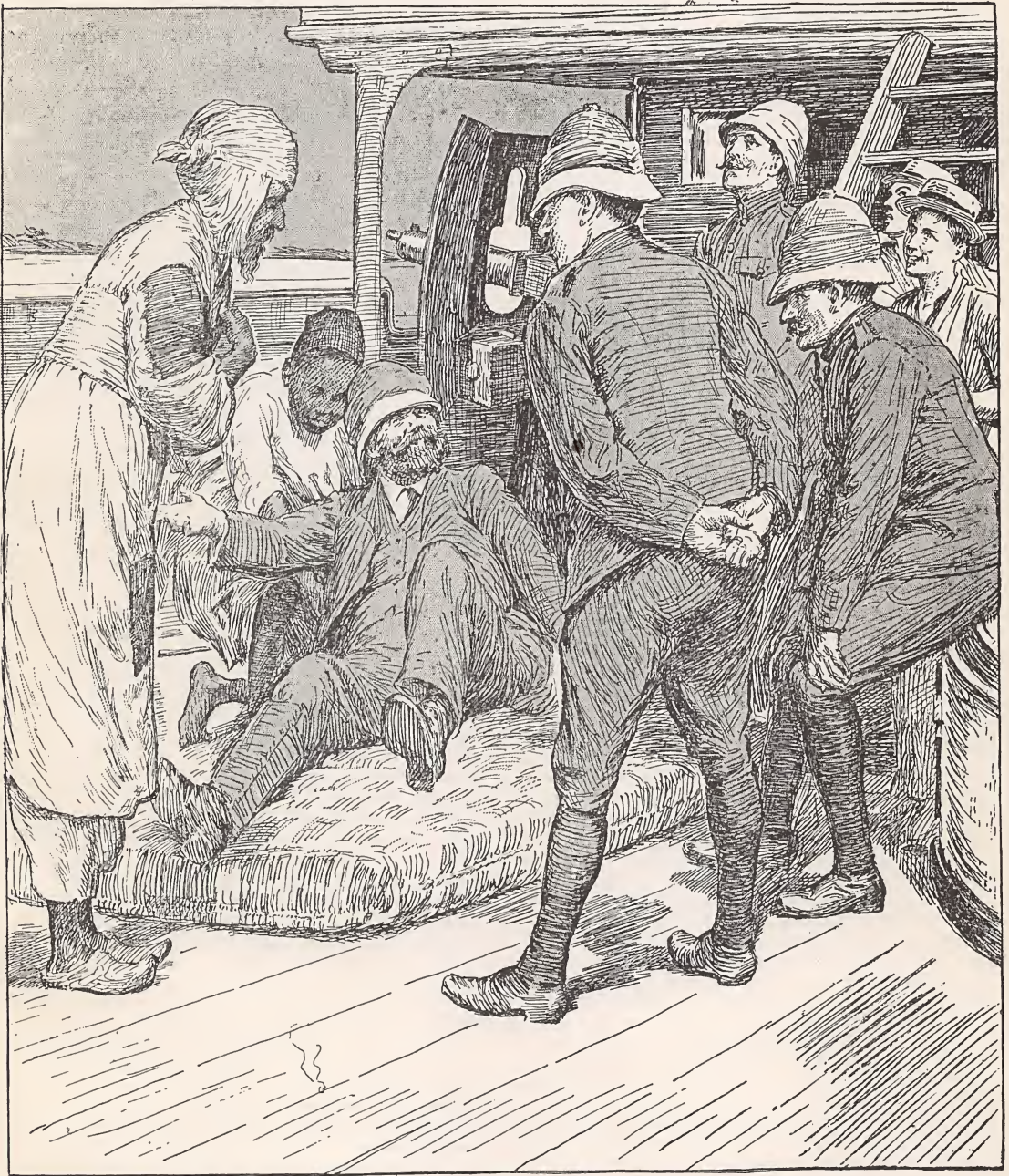
Now the spears came whizzing and hurtling into the boat, but owing to the excitement of the dervishes and their unsound footing on the shifting sand of the bottom most were badly aimed. They rang on the boat's side and splintered the thwarts, and one went through the planks below the water-line, one slashed the fleshy part of Selim's arm and stuck in the seat beside him. Dick had his eye on the men armed with guns, and fired among them as they were taking aim, then threw his revolver straight in the face of a man in the water who was struggling to grab the boat. The dervishes' firing was too high, and most of the bullets went through the sail. Dick felt a hot sting in his shoulder, and thought it was a splinter. Harry struck out vigorously with his cudgel at the men in the water who tried to grip the boat: one still hung on after they were well out of danger. Harry unclasped his fingers and threw him back into the water. They were past the dervishes; a few spears fell short, a last shot, and they were safe.

The boys hurrahd, and Selim laughed—laughed loud and hysterically: the blood was streaming down his arm and spattering the bottom of the boat, but he laughed and rolled himself from side to side, and laughed again, but would not relinquish the tiller. The missionary tied a bandage tightly round his arm above the wound, and, as they were now at the head of Crocodile Creek and safe from all pursuit, Selim ran the boat in among the reeds, and they rested and took stock of their condition.

(Continued on page 362.)



"Harry struck out vigorously with his cudgel."



“‘Allow me to introduce Doctor Brandorf.’”

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINEX.

(Continued from page 359.)

THE Professor had escaped unhurt, owing to his position at the bottom of the boat: he had not been idle in the fray, but had done good service with his stick on the men that tried to seize the felucca.

'Those dervishes are awful muffs at shooting,' said Dick.

'I don't know,' replied Harry doubtfully; 'they're quite good enough for me,' and he took off his straw hat and exhibited a bullet hole clean through the crown. 'And they've spoilt your Sunday coat too, he continued, laughing. 'There's no end of a rip across the shoulder, here—why, it's wet—you've got a bullet, Dick.'

Dick took off his coat and shirt, and the missionary, who had been binding up Selim's arm more securely, examined the wound. A bullet had entered his shoulder at an angle, and had apparently glanced along the shoulder-blade and out again. The missionary bound it up as well as he could, but it was an awkward place to bandage, and he told Dick that he must not move his arm on any account, but rest it with his hand in the open front of his shirt as a sling.

Harry, with the exception of the damage done to his head-gear, had escaped. and also the missionary, which was rather remarkable, as he formed the biggest target, having been most exposed. The boys had a confused impression of seeing him during those critical three minutes standing upright in the boat, and flinging his arms in a most eccentric manner; he had no weapon, but had invented one of his own which contributed more to their escape than they knew. There was a quantity of loose sand at the bottom of the boat and in the few minutes before the final rush, he had scraped this together in a heap, and when the moment came, he swiftly threw it in handfuls broadcast into the eyes of the nearer dervishes, blinding them for the moment and throwing them into confusion.

The boat was leaking slightly where the spear had split the side below the water-line, the head of the spear was still in and helped to stop it, and they caulked it as best they could by ramming fragments of rag into the cracks. As they turned into the creek the wind served them no longer, and they would have nine miles to row to reach the Nile. The missionary and Harry took the oars and pulled the boat slowly down the creek, which was now only distinguishable from the surrounding waters by the tops of the reeds and the scrubby trees which, being on the higher ground of the bank, were well above the surface.

They took a long last look at the Oasis in the distance, with its groups of palms and date-trees: the waters reached almost to the spot where their camp stood. They could distinguish with Uncle Charlie's glasses the tent still standing and the canvas of Selim's kitchen.

'Good old Oasis,' said Dick; 'we had some jolly times there, didn't we? It's a desert island now, and no mistake.'

'I wish I had got my hyæna's skin,' said Harry.

'You must be very thankful you have got your own skin,' Uncle Charlie retorted.

'So I am,' said Harry; 'but I particularly wanted that old hyæna, and my camera and photos are all gone, but I've got a couple of dervishes' spears to show old Butterworth.'

'And we've got the hidden treasure,' cried Dick. 'Hurrah!'

'Yes, we have got it safe,' laughed Uncle Charlie. 'I can feel the corner of it sticking into my back.'

They shared a few biscuits and pulled round the rocky corner into the Nile. A quarter of a mile down, a steamer lay anchored in mid-river: over the paddle-wheel at its stern hung the Star and Crescent of the Egyptian flag and a tiny Union Jack drooped at the bow: from its upper deck the long barrel of a machine-gun projected. A few figures were moving on the decks below.

The boys saluted the flag with another 'Hurrah!' and falling into the down-stream current they were soon alongside. A strange spectacle they presented to the group of officers who leaned over the side of the gun-boat, watching their approach. The sail torn by bullets, the figure of Uncle Charlie lying in the bottom of the boat, Dick grimed and dirty with his shirt half on, half off, and his arm in a sling; a coloured boy at the tiller, with a smear of blood across his chest, and his arm wrapped round with rag; and, to crown all, a gaunt figure with disordered turban wearing the dark patches of the Mahdist uniform.

'Is that you, Dick?' sang out one of the officers. What has happened to you—and the Professor? I hope it's nothing serious. Do you want to come on board? Is there anything we can do for you?'

It was Lieutenant Maitland.

'I'm awfully glad we've fallen in with you,' said Dick, standing up in the boat as they came alongside. 'We have had a rough time. The Professor has met with an accident and injured his leg. Yes, we should like to come on board.'

Uncle Charlie was helped up by the side by the good-natured officers. Dick and the missionary made fast the felucca, and Selim and Harry lowered the mast. In a few moments they were all together on the forward deck, Uncle Charlie reclining on a mattress that had been brought him. Mr. Maitland had presented Uncle Charlie and the boys to the officers, and sidelong glances were directed to the strange figure of the missionary.

'You must have had a rough time,' said the Lieutenant, surveying them sympathetically. 'Why, you are all of you damaged, and you've captured a dervish too,' he added, lowering his voice. 'It's the first real dervish I've seen since I've been out.'

'Is it?' said Uncle Charlie, laughing; 'and what if he is no dervish at all? Gentlemen, allow me to introduce Doctor Brandorf.'

The missionary stood bowing to one and another, Uncle Charlie giving a short account of him as if he were describing a figure in a waxwork exhibition.

'And this is our old friend Selim,' said the Lieutenant. 'Any more rat-traps where you have been, Selim?'

'Plenty,' replied Selim, grinning and shaking his head as if he could say a great deal more if he chose.

'What I want,' cried Dick, 'is a good wash, a good square meal and a good sleep, and if we can get that on board, under the Star and Crescent and the Union Jack,

I'll say thank you; but first of all Uncle wants to see the Officer in Command.

'You've been talking to him the whole time,' laughed the Lieutenant.

'What, you—you are not——' began Dick, a little disconcerted.

'No, this gentleman,' replied the Lieutenant, indicating the officer who stood at his side—a short, stoutish gentleman with a keen but kindly eye. 'Captain Rogers is Chief-in-Command here.'

'Do you wish to see me alone—in private?' asked Captain Rogers.

'I think that will be more in form,' replied the Professor. So they helped him into an adjoining deck-cabin, and he beckoned Dick to accompany him.

'We think it our duty to report to you the presence of a body of dervishes in the hills yonder,' said Uncle Charlie. 'My nephew has seen more of them than I have: in fact he, with his cousin, had the ill-fortune to be captured by them, and they were for some time prisoners in the dervish camp. He will give you an account of what he has seen, and as far as he can answer any questions you may wish to put to him.'

'Indeed,' said the Captain, 'I must heartily congratulate him on his escape. It is no pleasant thing for an Englishman to fall into their hands. There was a report at Wady Halfa that a dervish force had slipped by us, and a detachment has been sent by way of the desert to cut them off if possible, and this gunboat is patrolling here to await developments. Now I am all attention, if your nephew will just tell me his story in his own way.'

The Captain took a piece of paper and a pencil, and Dick ran through his and Harry's adventures.

(Concluded on page 375.)

NOW RIDE AWAY, FLEETFOOT.

'NOW ride away, Fleetfoot,' I cry to my steed.
And Fleetfoot can go very quickly, indeed!
'We're hunting to-day, so must follow the pack';
And Fleetfoot is off as I leap on his back.

He dashes through meadows and vaults over gates,
At highest of hedges he ne'er hesitates;
A brook he'll jump over, a river he'll swim;
Yes, Fleetfoot is clever, I'm so proud of him!

When out on the common, I'm sure that his pace
Would carry us first were we running a race.
That Fleetfoot likes carrots I don't need to tell;
But, would you believe it? he likes buns as well.

And then when I wash him and brush out his hair,
So patient he stands when I call out 'Whoa, there!'
For Fleetfoot is always obedient and good,
But then—let me whisper—he's made—just of wood!

A. AMY HEYWOOD.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

XI.—SOME LITTLE-KNOWN FAVOURITES.

OUR subject is now fast drawing to a close. I fear there are still many countries whose national flower I have not yet been able to discover—sometimes because, like China, they have not got one.

One of my chief difficulties has been the United States.

Some years ago a friend of mine was entertaining an American celebrity at her house, and I was invited also; when I arrived I was astonished to find the whole house profusely decorated with great masses of Golden Rod ('Aaron's Rod,' as we sometimes call it—a well-known garden plant in England, flowering in the autumn). I inquired why, and my friend said, 'The Golden Rod is the American national flower, and I have done this as a compliment to my guest.' I was much struck with this pretty compliment, and when I started this series, I promptly put down Golden Rod for the United States. Now, in the summer of 1914, two ships of the American navy, containing some hundreds of American cadets, came for a few days to the town where I live. When helping to arrange an entertainment for them at our Town Hall, I caused the tables to be decorated with Golden Rod. I thought it would be a compliment. But to my disappointment they did not seem to recognise my meaning, and some said the 'American Beauty' is their flower—a very large and beautiful rose!

I then wrote to the American Consular Service in London, and they tell me that the majority of the states of the United States have their own flowers which have been adopted by the state legislatures or by conventions of the public school children. It is thought, however, that the Golden Rod is the most widely known of the native flowers of the United States (there are twenty-two varieties named in a field book of American wild flowers I have!) and perhaps would be considered the national flower; but they could give me no definite information. I have written to the Department of Agriculture at Washington for further help, but so far I have not received it. In the meantime I have come across different items of news. For instance, I read that the *Escholtzia* is the national flower of California. Then, again, I read that the coat of arms of South Carolina shows a date palm, with a serpent twined round it. I believe the serpent refers to the superstition that the date palm was the forbidden fruit of the Garden of Eden.

Yet again I have read that the Poppy is the national flower of Mexico. It is said that when the Archduke Maximilian of Austria accepted the empire of Mexico, and went to take possession, he wished to create a new Order with which to honour certain persons. He had to consult Napoleon III. on the matter and he objected to the colour chosen, which was poppy scarlet; Napoleon objected because that was the colour of the ribbon of the French Legion of Honour. Maximilian's wife wrote to Napoleon III. and sent him a poppy petal, and pointed out to him that she chose the colour from that, and added that 'the order of nature came before the Order of the Legion of Honour!' Thus she got her way, and it is said that from that incident the Mexicans adopted the flower as national.

That is almost all I have been able to gather together about the national flowers of America. Sweden seems to have the *Amaranth* for its national flower. This flower is better known to most of us by the curious name of 'Love lies bleeding.' It is considered the emblem of incorruptibility and they have an Order of Knighthood of the *Amaranth* and Crown. This order was created in 1653 at a wonderful festival arranged by the then queen, at which she bestowed the order on many distinguished persons; it consisted of a ribbon and medal, the latter being an *amaranth* in enamel, surrounded by the motto 'Dolce nella memoria,' which being translated means 'Sweet in the memory.'

Now let us see about India. Some people hold that the Lotus is India's emblem (it is sacred to Buddha), and others the Jasmin (spelt in this curious fashion!). Certain it is that the Jasmin is an object of devotion by the Hindu women, and it enters very largely into their religious rites of all kinds, in fact no ceremony seems complete without it. It has a very powerful perfume, so powerful that strangers visiting the country for the first time are often quite overcome by it, and it is an impression which always remains. Hindu ladies love powerful scents: they wreath their hair with Jasmin and have quantities in their apartments. There are several varieties, but one very large yellow kind is the favourite. When you read books about Indian life, Jasmin is sure to be mentioned sooner or later, and the poetry of the country is full of references to it. For instance a woman is described as a 'rose with jasmin breath,' showing what a very striking feature is the scent of the Jasmin in the life of the country.

New Zealand's emblem I believe is a Fern. Ferns are very prolific in that country, and I expect this has given rise to its adoption. You often see ladies wearing variously shaped jade ornaments, on which is fixed a



1. GOLDEN ROD OF AMERICA.

long golden fern; this is a sure sign that it is a memento from New Zealand.

Spain has adopted the Pomegranate, but I cannot find much about their feeling towards it. Lastly there is the Jersey Lily, the emblem of the island in our Channel of that name. I understand this lily refuses to be persuaded to make its home elsewhere, so it is certainly faithful to its birthplace!

This really concludes all I can find out about 'national' flowers, in the sense in which I have hitherto used the term. But I shall finish my series with an article upon certain flowers which for some years seemed as though they were going to be national—in fact they *were* national for a time, but their time has passed. It is quite



2. JASMIN (OBJECT OF DEVOTION BY HINDU WOMEN)

possible that some countries have never had a national flower, but there has generally been a time when for some reason or other a certain flower has come very much into prominence, and it is some of these with which I shall deal in my next and last article of the series.

E. M. BARLOW.

KING RHOUD AND THE GOLDFINCH.

ONE fine spring morning, King Rhoud was walking in the forest with his friend, Earl Reigin. The two men were talking about the wicked plots of the king's enemies, when suddenly they heard a piteous scream.

'It is a bird,' said the king, 'in this tree close by. Let us see what we can do for it.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Reigin, impatiently; 'what does a *bird* matter when you have the affairs of a nation on your mind?'

'The nearest duty must always come first,' said the king, with a smile. 'I am a pretty good climber, Reigin.'

'But this trunk is like a tower. It has not a single branch!' objected the earl.

'I am not tall, certainly,' said the king, 'but you are very strong, and can lift me up.'

'But you might fall and kill yourself. Why should you risk your valuable life for the sake of a bird?'

'Many have died for less,' replied Rhoud.

So the earl, still grumbling, had to help the king to get into the tree.

He came down safely, bearing in his bosom a pretty little wounded goldfinch. This he took home, and gave into the care of his small daughter, caring nothing for the sneers of his courtiers, who said among themselves, 'Our king is no better than a child! He does not seem to realise the perils ahead.'

The position was indeed serious. Traitors were busily plotting against the king's life. They loosened a heavy plank above his head. 'Rhoud will soon be past all healing,' they said. And one night, when the king, wearied out, returned from a long journey, the traitor



“‘But for the cry of this little bird, your king had now been dead.’”

who coveted his place and name thought that the time had come to strike the blow.

But soon after Rhoud had fallen asleep he was

awakened by a piteous cry. It came from the famishing bird, which the careless little princess had forgotten to feed.

'You poor thing!' exclaimed the kind-hearted king, as he sprang out of bed. 'I saved you from one death, and have almost allowed you to die by another, and perhaps a more cruel one.'

He attended to the starving creature, and soon stilled its piercing cry. He was just about to lie down again when right upon the bed fell the loosened beam!

Every inmate of the palace was roused by the crash. The servants, screaming with terror, and crying, 'Treachery! treachery! the king is slain!' rushed to the spot. There stood the king, pale, but with a smile on his face.

He raised the bird-cage. 'God's hand has preserved me,' he said, reverently. 'Give thanks, my people—ye who truly love me! But for the cry of this little bird, your king had now been dead.'

And from that time forward no one laughed at the king for his kindness to the goldfinch. E. DYKE.

THE TIGERS OF CHERRA.

INDIA has a good many districts that are much frequented by tigers, and one of the places where these animals are numerous and audacious is Cherra. It is among the hills on the north-eastern frontier, and its wooded ravines and caves are just the spots where tigers can lurk: It is not in these, however, that the tigers get their food. They come after the cattle, of which there are large herds, which live upon the grass upon the slopes. The natives keep a sharp look-out for the tigers; they have sentries posted with guns to shoot any they may notice approaching the cows, and traps also are set for the animals, which are sometimes successful. When it is dark, the tigers have an artful way of skulking round the outbuildings, or if they are crossing the open while the moon shines they hold their bodies close to the ground. Going out to dinner, it is usual to form a party and carry lights, though these do not always scare tigers.

For example, one night during heavy rain a gentleman was reading in bed, a lamp being on a table between his bed and a low window, looking into the verandah. He heard a slight noise, of which he took no heed, but a louder bump led him to look up, and, behold! there was a tiger's head pressed against the window, which only the narrowness of the sash prevented him from breaking. The gentleman jumped up to seize a loaded gun that stood there, and the animal moved away. What his intention was no one can say; perhaps he peeped in from curiosity. One night a native doctor had to go out hastily to see a sick person in heavy rain. He took a torch with him. He was knocked down by a tiger, in spite of the light, but the animal did not attack him for some reason. A sentry saw it pass and fired at it: the shot, unfortunately, missed, so it escaped. Usually these tigers, fierce as they are, seem satisfied with cows, and do not seek human prey. Still, people have to be cautious against prowling tigers, which, failing to secure a cow, might seize upon a man or woman. It happened one day that a couple of officers and a friend were talking just under the mess-house, which stood on a little hill, when one of them suddenly rushed up the hill, away from his companions, much to their astonishment. He was too out of breath to speak, but as he stood at the door of the mess-house, he pointed downwards. This movement

of his made them look round, and then they saw a tiger creeping stealthily along a gully, which was only separated from them by a low wall. They raised a loud shout, and the beast retreated, much to their satisfaction. Evidently their companion had got a glimpse of it first, and ran to save himself before he warned his friends.

We will add one more comical story about the tigers of Cherra before we take leave of them. One of the important persons there is called the Assistant Commissioner. Several years ago he paid a Saturday visit to a friend's house, and returned, as he generally did, with an escort; for, owing to his residence being away from the town, he rode in an old-fashioned sedan-chair, which two natives carried, and he was also accompanied by his table-servant and a torch-bearer. On this particular evening he had not travelled far from his friend's house when a tiger suddenly appeared upon the scene. Away ran the chairmen and the attendants, leaving him alone in the darkness. Where the tiger might be he could not tell, nor how far he was safe in the sedan-chair from an attack by one or perhaps more. The chair was stout enough, but a wind got up which he feared might topple it over and smash the windows. He shouted loudly, but nobody came to his rescue, and he dared not venture out and walk in the dark, as he had some distance to go. Therefore he stayed all night in the chair, and started home at daylight, quite numbed with cold. I expect, when he saw them, the attendants who took to their heels had a bad time of it.

J. R. S. C.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 355.)

'OH, Norah, what shall we do?' asked Joan, who felt at that moment that they had been very foolish to venture here alone.

But Norah did not share her friend's fears.

'Come back here. We can hide and wait to see who it is,' she said, drawing her companion into the shelter of some thick chestnut bushes that would serve to screen them from view.

They were not a moment too soon in seeking this shelter, for in another second a man pushed his way through the bushes, and came to a stand in the clearing just where they had stood themselves only such a short time before. This was not any one whom the two girls had ever seen before. They could see him perfectly through the branches of the chestnuts, and he stood in such a position that he was facing them with the light of the setting sun full on his face.

He was tall, with a clean-shaven face, and clearly cut features. He looked old, for his hair was grey, turning white in some places. He had thick bushy eyebrows, and dark eyes that roved here and there as though seeking for something. He wore a long overcoat with a cape to it, though the summer night was very warm, and on his head was a wide-brimmed soft felt hat. In his right hand he carried a stick with a heavy knob at the top, and with this stick he from time to time prodded the earth around where he stood. He stood so for a little while, and then he moved forward, causing Joan to shrink still farther back into the shelter of the bushes,

though Norah peered forward with interest, for she wanted very much to see what he meant to do next. The old gentleman came to where the earth had been disturbed, and seeing what had been done there he uttered an exclamation that might have been expressive of anything. Then he stooped down, and did exactly what Norah had done just a few minutes before—he raised some of the loose turf and moss. This appeared to satisfy him, for the girls heard him mutter, ‘Fools! so they think it is here! I did well with that paper. May they dig till their backs are broken.’ He raised himself upright once more and stood still for a little while, evidently admiring the view. The wood sloped away gently on all sides, and in the west the sky was all ablaze with the varied hues of the setting sun. Little cloud islands floated here and there in the sea of colour, with many a turreted castle, or cloud-capped mountain outlined against the crimson or gold. The girls saw where his gaze was directed and themselves looked too, and for a little space forgot the words that they had heard fall from the lips of the strange old man, when at last he turned and went away through the undergrowth, and they were free to exchange opinions once more.

‘Oh, I am glad that he has gone,’ said Joan, who decided that the boys might have all the adventures for the future, as she could do very well without them.

Norah, however, was thoroughly enjoying herself.

‘I like the look of him,’ she said. ‘And I can’t think how it is, but I seem to know his face. I have a feeling that I have seen him or his portrait somewhere. I had quite a difficulty in keeping from speaking to him when he stood there looking at the sunset. Isn’t it grand?’

‘It is, beautiful,’ agreed Joan, as they made their way once more to the road by means of the little path.

‘I wonder what he meant when he said, “So they think it is here,”’ said Norah, wrinkling her brows. ‘I know Herr Scharf and that other man are looking for something that this old gentleman does not want them to find.’

‘Oh, yes! and now I know who he is,’ she went on excitedly.

‘Who is he?’ asked Joan, for the identity of this stranger had been occupying her thoughts for the last few minutes.

‘Why, he is the owner of the Manor, Mr. Haverford, of course,’ said Norah. ‘And he knows that the two men, Dr. Railton’s new dispenser and that other man, are trying to find something, and so he has purposely misled them as to where they are to look for it. But from the message that the boys found this morning it looks as though they had discovered the mistake.’

‘Yes, it does,’ agreed Joan. ‘I wonder if you are right; and if you are, why does Mr. Haverford keep that man at his place, when he knows that he is spying on him? You know Father said that he lived there in the way that he does because he has a secret that no one must learn. But it looks as though at least two people are very busy trying to find out what that secret is.’

‘We ought to have stepped out and told him all that we know,’ said Norah decidedly. ‘That would have been the best thing to have done. I don’t like the look of Herr Scharf a little bit. I wonder that Dr. Railton engaged him.’

‘He would not only that he couldn’t get any one else at short notice,’ said Joan. ‘I know that, because

I heard him telling Aunt Eliza so. I think Father dislikes him, and he is not going to stay more than a month or two. Only till some one else can be found.’

‘I should not be surprised if he disappeared some day,’ said Norah, as they walked up the drive. ‘I think he will only stay here till he has found out what he wants to, and then he will disappear.’

Indoors they found the three boys, and as soon as they were alone they told what they had heard and seen that evening.

‘Good for you,’ said Stanley, in tones expressing complete approval of their actions. ‘I am glad that you thought to go there. We have not had a chance, but we mean to go out later on. It will be moonlight presently. I had an idea when we were out, and we are going to try it. But there is no need to say anything to Aunt Eliza.’

‘What are you going to do?’ asked Norah, who had had enough adventure that evening to make her long for more.

‘Well, we thought it all out as we came home,’ said Jim, rising as he spoke to close the door. ‘You tell them, Stan,’ he went on, having made sure that they could not be overheard, and accordingly Stanley unfolded his plan to the two girls—a plan that made Norah wish more ardently than ever that she was a boy, and that made Joan feel almost afraid to go to bed.

CHAPTER XII.

‘It is like this,’ said Stanley. ‘We have not been able to get to the Manor all day, and I thought that we might go to-night, after the moon has risen. There will be less chance of our being seen then, and at the same time I don’t think that there will be anything to prevent our finding Jinks—if he is to be found.’

He paused for a moment, and Norah said eagerly, ‘Oh, Stanley, do let us come too. I am sure we will not make a noise, or anything.’

‘I am afraid that it cannot be done,’ he answered. ‘You see, it is all right for us, but it is hardly the kind of work for girls. I know Father would not like it at all, and I don’t think your people would either.’

‘I don’t know about that,’ said Norah. ‘Mother might not, but Father would not mind. Oh, I wish they were here. They said in the last letter we had that they might be home by Christmas. Won’t it be jolly if they are?’

The thought of their parents’ return took Norah’s mind off the present discussion for a moment, and when they returned to it once more, she was willing to be guided by the counsels of the others, who saw that for the girls to accompany them that night on their expedition into the Manor grounds must not only be rather risky for the girls themselves, but exceedingly likely to hamper the movements of the boys, and perhaps in the end prevent them from finding Jinks.

‘I really don’t think I should dare to go, either,’ said Joan, with a sigh of relief that things had been settled so that they might stay safely at home. As has been said before, she was not nearly so fond of adventures as Norah, and indeed she shrank from visiting the grounds of the old house even in broad daylight.

(Continued on page 370.)



“Come back here. We can hide and wait to see who it is.”



“‘Hullo! what’s up?’ he muttered, sleepily.”

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 367.)

'WHEN do you think of starting?' asked Norah, as they ate their supper.

'Well, it will not be of any use to go just yet,' said Stanley, helping himself to a large slice of seed cake. 'There would not be anything to be gained by letting all the world know your intentions, and we should certainly be noticed by some one if we set out much before midnight.'

Joan shivered. 'I think it is just dreadfully dangerous,' she said. 'Only think if those men happened to be there, and saw you?'

'Oh, we'd soon manage to give them the slip,' said Raymond, reassuringly. 'Just go to bed, you and Norah, and leave it to us. We will tell you all about it at breakfast. And now I think that we will make tracks for the upper regions. It isn't time for the moon to rise yet, and anyway, as Stan has just said, there is no sense in telling all the world what you are going to do. We will get a nap before it is time to set out.'

'Yes, and jolly well sleep the clock round,' scoffed Jim, derisively. 'You won't catch me taking any naps to-night.'

'Oh! yes, we shall; I have got an alarm clock, and I will set it for half-past twelve,' said Stanley. 'Then I'll wake you and we can get off at once. That will leave us any amount of time to see all that we want to see.'

The girls said good-night to them, and went off to their own room, and the boys, who were very tired with their long day's work, lost little time in tumbling, half dressed, into bed.

Stanley set the clock for half-past twelve, and prepared to follow the example of the other two, and get what sleep he might; but, unfortunately, sleep would not come to him, and he was still tossing from side to side of his bed when the clock commenced to whirl and groan. Springing up in bed, the boy seized the offending timepiece and hastily buried it under the bed-clothes, finishing by sitting on it, as its voice was still all too plainly audible.

'Hang the thing!' he exclaimed, under his breath. 'What an awful din it does make, to be sure! We shall be having a visit from Aunt Eliza if this reaches her ears, and I should not be a bit surprised if she does hear it.'

But, fortunately for the boys, Aunt Eliza was sleeping unusually soundly, and she heard nothing of the clock's nocturnal performance. As soon as it had, as he expressed it, 'got through its piece,' Stanley got out of bed, and, having roused Jim, went to Raymond's bed and proceeded to shake him into wakefulness.

That worthy was dreaming, and took more rousing than had Jim, to whose brain the sounds of the alarm clock had evidently commenced to penetrate. Stanley shook and whispered alternately, and at last Raymond half raised himself in bed, and, yawning with great abandon, rubbed his eyes and looked at the other.

'Hullo, what's up?' he muttered sleepily, and at that Stanley gave him a last vigorous shake.

'It is half-past twelve, or rather it was a few minutes ago,' he said. 'A nice job I have had to wake you. Jim is dressing, and we shall have to hurry up, or we shall not have any time there.'

Raymond was wide awake in a moment. He remembered their proposed visit to the grounds of the Manor,

and, springing out of bed, he at once commenced to dress, saying, as he put on his clothes: 'I'm awfully sorry I was so dead asleep, but I won't be long. I'll meet you downstairs in a jiffy.'

With that Stanley went off to finish his own toilet, and a few minutes later the three boys met in the hall. Stanley and Jim had been the first downstairs, and the former had paid a visit to the kitchen regions, returning with matches and a candle, and one or two other odds and ends which he said might come in useful.

They went out silently, and were soon hastening in the direction of the Manor. Going down the lane they came to the tree that hung so conveniently over the wall, and with its help they were soon in the forbidden territory. It was clear, and the moon was shining so brightly that it was, as Jim remarked, almost as light as day. They determined to make a thorough search of the grounds, and before doing this it was decided that they should go up to the silver birch and take their bearings, and each of them would then have a part of the grounds allotted to him to search.

'And we must not forget that there may be some one about,' said Raymond, as they made their way up the sloping ground, and at last reached the summit of the hill on which stood the tree. 'It is not at all unlikely that one or other of these men will be about here; and in any case there is the old man himself. He would be an unpleasant customer to meet, I fancy, if all accounts are true.'

'Well, of course, we are trespassing, there's no question about that,' agreed Stanley. 'I say,' he added, 'let's sit down for a moment and have a rest. It is a stiff climb up here, and we must fix up about our districts.'

The others agreed to this proposal, and all sat down on the short turf that clothed the hill at this point. They had been settling in which directions they were to search, when all at once Jim laid a hand on the arm of each of his companions, and whispered, 'I say, look down there!'

The other two looked in the direction that Jim indicated, and saw at once that Herr Scharf and another man were coming towards them up the slope. They were evidently not in the least afraid of being seen, and they walked carelessly, stamping on dried twigs, and rustling through the dead leaves in a way that showed them to be unused to woods.

They came steadily nearer and nearer, and the boys sat as though rooted to the spot. They simply could not move, for each of the three wanted to see where the men were going, and what their business might be. It was not until they were only a few yards distant from them that either of the watchers seemed able to make a move. It was Raymond who whispered, 'Quick, into those bushes!' and suited the action to the words by worming his way into a clump of thickly-growing bushes close by. He was followed silently enough by the other two, and once hidden, they turned again to watching the dispenser and his companion. These two went up almost to the silver birch, and then began measuring away from it, in different directions, every now and then stopping to speak to one another.

At last their measuring brought them quite close to the bushes where the boys were hidden, just at the moment when Stanley was saying, 'I wonder if they found it was no go up there in the other wood, where the girls saw them.'

Too late the boy saw that the men had drawn nearer, and the other two were not quick enough in their efforts to warn him of the danger. The three adventurers saw the men pause and glance quickly round. Stanley's unfortunate speech had revealed their presence there!

(Continued on page 382.)

'A CLEVER ASS.'

'I SAY, Father!' cried Reggie, as he ran in from school one afternoon, 'have you heard about that horse that went all the way from Blackfriars to Mile End by itself?'

'What do you mean?' exclaimed Mr. King, looking up from the paper he was reading. 'How did the horse go by itself—did it run away?'

'Oh no! It was in a van, and when it got to Mile End they found that the poor chap who was driving was quite dead. The driver of another van said he had been just in front, and the horse must have followed him safely through the crowded streets all the way home. Doesn't it seem wonderful?'

'It does, in one sense,' replied Mr. King; 'yet it is by no means the most wonderful way in which animals have shown their intelligence. Horses have been known to stop dead rather than run over a fallen child, and even moved the child out of harm's way by taking its clothes between their teeth and lifting it aside. And they have performed many most remarkable acts on the battlefield. There is a story of one who, when its master, an officer in command, fell mortally wounded, actually led the charge by itself, dashing forward towards the enemy with flashing eyes and tossing mane, while showing such fire and spirit that the men followed it as they would their human leader.'

'How ripping!' cried Jack, his eyes aglow. 'I wish I had a beast like that, Father. But I expect all I'm ever likely to get is a little moke. I wonder why donkeys are so stupid and horses so intelligent?'

'You are quite mistaken in thinking donkeys are naturally stupid,' replied his father. 'It is only the way they have been treated for years and years that makes them appear dull and obstinate. If any other animal had been so badly used and overworked it would, I expect, be just the same as the poor abused ass. Indeed, many human beings grow dogged and slow-witted when they are neglected and ill-used. But I will tell you the true story of a very clever ass named Valiante, who lived in the year 1816, and belonged to a certain Captain Dundas, who was stationed at Malta. Valiante was then at Gibraltar, in the care of a merchant named Mr. Weekes, but as his owner wanted him he was shipped on board a frigate called the *Ister*, bound for the island of Malta.'

'On the voyage there the vessel struck some sands a fair distance from the shore. A very high sea was running at the time, so high that one of the boats in which the crew attempted to land was lost. As the poor ass couldn't be given a place in a small boat he was thrown into the sea, so that he might at least have the chance of swimming to land, although no one thought he could possibly do so. After this the crew lost sight of him, and all gave him up as drowned. A few days later, the official, whose duty it was to open the gates of Gibraltar in the mornings, was surprised to see Valiante standing waiting to be let in. As soon as he was admitted, he walked straight to the stable belonging to Mr. Weekes and settled down as usual. Mr. Weekes was amazed to

see him, but concluded that, for some reason or other, he could not have been taken aboard the *Ister*. He was still more amazed when he heard from a member of the crew of that ship what had actually happened to this very clever ass. He had succeeded in doing what would have been impossible to most human beings.

'He had not only swum ashore in a storm, but had, "without guide, compass, or map," walked more than two hundred miles through a country not only entirely unknown to him but wild and mountainous, with many streams to be crossed on his way. He made this difficult journey in such good time that there could be no doubt he had come direct, without taking a single wrong turning. If, after that wonderful performance, you can call an ass a stupid animal, I would very much like to know why you think so much of the heroes in those stories of adventure you are so fond of reading!'

'I think old Valiante was as good as any of them. Father!' laughed Jack. 'I will never call an ass stupid again; and when people call me one I'll take it as a great compliment.'

'The best way by far, my boy,' agreed his father. 'But you must try and prove yourself to be as clever as Valiante.'

E. ROBERTS.

MY GARDEN GUESTS.

THERE'S a lovely secret hidden in the hawthorn by the gate—

It was told me by the Thristle and his loving little mate: They are building in the branches, and a pretty cosy home Will be finished very shortly, when the best is all to come.

Mrs. Thristle's kindly promised she will show me by-and-by

Speckled eggs so smooth and dainty, like to bits of summer sky;

And perhaps a little later, if I do not say a word, I may watch each egg-shell open to let out a baby bird.

I have heard of boys so naughty they would rob poor birdies' nests,

But I do not mean to tell them of my little garden guests;

I will keep the hawthorn's secret to the very, very end, And the happiest of summers shall my pretty Thristles spend.

EILEEN CARFRAE.

THE PEASANT'S MISTAKE.

A FUNNY story is told about a countryman whose master sent him to the squire of the village with a present of some fine pears. When the man arrived at the squire's house, he met on the staircase two big monkeys, richly attired in blue, gold-embroidered dresses, and girded with swords.

They at once pounced upon the fruit, and the countryman, who had never before seen a monkey, and did not know that the squire owned such queer pets, supposed them to be human beings of high rank (though not very good-looking) and let them do as they pleased.

Having taken some of the finest of the pears, they sat down on the stairs to eat them, while the man, carrying the now almost empty basket, proceeded up the staircase in search of the squire. That gentleman, astonished to see so little fruit in so large a basket, asked the bearer if he had not lost part of the contents on the way



"The countryman let them do as they pleased."

'Yes, sir,' replied the man; 'the basket was full when I brought it here, but your young gentlemen helped themselves to some of the pears, which they are now eating on the staircase.'

Several servants, who had witnessed the incident, supplied an explanation, with the result that the poor peasant became the laughing-stock of the whole village.

E. PYKE.

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

X.—YPRES.

IN the province of West Flanders, not far from the French frontier, is situated the town of Ypres, a place which until lately many English people hardly



"The defence of the trenches is one of the most glorious stories of the British Army."

knew by name, but which, nevertheless, in the past has played a great part in history.

Yper, Jeper, Iper, Ipper, Wipers—even in the eighteenth, sixteenth, and fourteenth centuries English lips have found the word difficult to pronounce, but in all those different periods British soldiers have camped and fought and died in the chilly swamps round the city,

have bombarded its walls, or, when the fortunes of war shifted, garrisoned them against some other foe.

The story of Ypres has its beginning more than a thousand years ago, when it was first fortified by Baldwin, the Flemish son-in-law of Alfred the Great, and ever since then its interests and those of our own country have been closely interwoven, and we find its

name, in one or another quaint spelling, figuring again and again in English chronicles and State Papers.

Like most towns which lie near a frontier, Ypres has had an exciting and troubled career; for, as the tide of conquest and invasion swept backwards and forwards through the ages, it has belonged first to one country, then to another. In mediæval times, certainly, the men of Ypres did not always show the sturdy spirit of independence and self-sacrifice of other cities like Ghent and Bruges, and many times their records are disfigured by dark stories of weakness and treachery.

In the fourteenth century many of the great cities of the Low Countries, having become rich and powerful, rebelled against their feudal ruler, the Count of Flanders. In Ghent a party was formed called the White Hoods, who domineered over their more peaceful fellow-townsmen, and tried to compel other cities into alliance with them. Ypres, as so often happened in later days, was a doubtful factor, and when John Lyon, the famous leader of the White Hoods, died, there was great rivalry between his successors and the Count of Flanders for the allegiance and assistance of the city.

Count Louis, for his part, sent a number of his knights and men-at-arms into the town to strengthen the garrison, and at the same time the turbulent Ghent burghers swore that they would force Ypres, by threats of massacre, into an alliance. A large force was dispatched southward with this intent.

The garrison of the threatened city assembled in the market-place, and, led by the French knights, prepared to make a brave defence; but the guildsmen and lower orders of the town revolted, and demanded entrance for the men of Ghent. A fierce struggle ensued between the two parties, many of the knights were slain, and the victors opened the gates to the enemy.

For some time after this Ypres continued to be an ally of Ghent, but the Count of Flanders was enraged with the rebellious city, and determined that it should be severely punished. Tidings of this resolve came to Ypres, and the citizens appealed to Ghent for help. This was sent, but soon afterwards the Count of Flanders, by means of an ambush, defeated the Flemish armies and marched upon the city, intending to besiege it.

The citizens of Ypres were now alarmed at the consequences of their disloyalty, and, instead of trying to defend the town, they decided to humiliate themselves, promise amendment, and beg for mercy. A council was held, and then three hundred of the principal inhabitants marched out of the city, with the keys of the gates in their hands, and, seeing the Count, they threw themselves upon their knees and begged for mercy and pardon.

The Count, we are told, had pity on the suppliants, but his pity was not very deep nor long-lived, and during the next three weeks seven hundred of the citizens were executed by his orders, while others were sent as prisoners to Bruges.

A few years later we find Ypres joyfully welcoming Philip Van Artevelde, the great Flemish leader, and, after his defeat and death, submitting without delay to his enemy, the King of France.

During all this period England was at war with France, and in 1383 an army, under the command of the Bishop of Norwich, having taken Dunkirk, Cassel, and other towns, marched upon Ypres and besieged it. The English were helped in this enterprise by the citizens of Ghent, who were much pleased at being invited to

fight against their fickle allies, and sent a force of twenty thousand men to join the Bishop's army.

On this occasion the inhabitants of Ypres, controlled and encouraged by their French leaders, defended the city bravely, and it held out for a long time in spite of fierce assaults that were made upon the walls. In spite of this strong defence, however, it seemed impossible that the city could resist successfully, for the English were able to reinforce their army through Calais, and the warlike young Bishop of Norwich declared that he would never depart until Ypres surrendered.

At that time, as is the case now, Ypres was surrounded by marshy country, and there were deep dykes or ditches outside the walls. In order to get to close quarters with their enemy, the English planned to fill up these ditches with faggots, and large numbers of workmen were employed in cutting wood for the purpose. Before this plan was carried out, however, rumours were spread abroad that the King of France was marching to relieve the city with a large army. At first the Bishop did not believe these reports, but later, convinced of their truth, and not daring to risk the safety of his troops, he decided to raise the siege.

The governor of the city during this critical period was a French knight, the Lord de St. Paul, and so skilfully and bravely was the defence carried out, that the town suffered very little damage, and the wonderful buildings, including the great Cloth Hall, were left intact.

For some time after this siege the town enjoyed comparative peace, but troubled days came again two hundred years later, and Ypres, like most other cities of Flanders, bore its share in the great struggle for independence. In 1584 it was captured by the Spaniards after a long siege, and the conquerors had the bodies of many Protestants taken from their graves and hanged, while members of the reformed religion found in the city were expelled.

Ypres was besieged again in 1646 by the army of Louis XIV., and in 1710, when it was in the possession of France, an attempt was made to capture it by the allies.

On this occasion a plan was formed to surprise the city, which only had a small garrison, and a force of between five and six thousand men was sent against it. They marched with great secrecy, and a small party, who went on ahead, actually succeeded in passing the defences. A brave sentinel, however, recognised the leader of the band, and pulling up the drawbridge, he gave the alarm. The intruders were killed or captured, and the rest of the attacking force, seeing that their design was discovered, retired from the walls.

There is an account of this event written by a Scotch soldier, and, from what he says, it is evident that, as so often had happened before, there were traitors within Ypres:

‘We did approach near to Jeper town,

Upon the tenth day of June.

It was whispered then by many a man

That the town of Jeper was sold,

And every man who would enter therein

Should have a pistole of gold.’

The poet goes on to describe how some of the horsemen had already passed the ‘outer bar’ when a sentry fired his gun, and immediately the town was astir, and the rattle of small shot and boom of cannon showed that the plot had been discovered.

More than two hundred years have gone by since that eventful midsummer morning, and it must have seemed

to Ypres that wars and sieges were things of the past. This, however, was very far from being the case. In 1914 Europe was once more ablaze, and the nations allied themselves together to resist the onslaught of a powerful and relentless enemy.

Ypres lay right in the path of the invading armies, blocking their way, and it was, therefore, subjected to a bombardment more terrible than any that it had known before in all its long and warlike history, a bombardment, indeed, which has destroyed the city and laid in ruins the beautiful Cloth Hall, that had endured, uninjured, through the sieges and assaults of more than six hundred years. The defence of the trenches round the town is one of the most wonderful of all the glorious stories of the British Army. A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.

THE MYSTERY OF AN ANCIENT PAPYRUS.

BY WILLIAM RAINERY.

(Concluded from page 363.)

'HAVE I got it right?' said the Captain, when Dick had ended his tale, as he glanced at his notes and ticked them off with his pencil. 'Dervish force numbers roughly speaking six hundred. Men appear for the most part irregulars, very few rifles, and those old pattern. Camp on high ground, reached by ascending ravine. Camels and baggage N.W. corner of camp. Position about fourteen miles due west from this point. There is a small creek, now scarcely to be seen on account of flood, in which is deep water for nine miles. Three miles from head of creek a little to the south is a temple, from thence one and a half miles north ravine. Up ravine one mile is camp.'

'That's right,' said Dick. 'There's deep water to the head of the creek, I understand,' said the Captain. 'After that shallow water with sandbanks. Is there enough water to float a boat as far as the ravine?'

'Scarcely,' replied Dick; 'but if the Nile is still rising and the boat did not draw too much water, it might be done. We came from the ruined temple which is nearly as far, but more to the south.'

'Thank you very much,' concluded Captain Rogers, 'and now you shall have your wash and square meal or anything we have on board; but I think the first thing you should attend to is that wound of yours. It may be only a scratch, as you say, but you should have it washed and properly bandaged; and I noticed that coloured boy has a nasty slash on his arm. We have not got a doctor on board, but there's a corporal who has seen as many wounds as most doctors—I will get him to patch you up.' Turning to the Professor, he added, 'If you will give us the pleasure of your company till to-morrow, a steamer will pass going down the river to Cairo, it will take you on board, and your boat can be towed astern. Don't you think that would be a good arrangement for you? I won't detain you any longer, you must be dead-beat. I'll give orders to the steward to attend to your wants, Master Dick, when you have had a thorough good rest. I will ask you to oblige me further by taking a seat in my boat and pointing out to me the entrance to the Creek you mention, as you say it is now scarcely distinguishable from the flood.'

Dick's three items—a good wash, a good meal, and a good sleep—worked wonders on the party: they would have liked a change of clothes, but this could not be, for the sufficient reason that they had no others. The missionary was at the greatest disadvantage in this respect, but there was one thing he could do, he unpicked the stitches and removed the dark patches—the badges of the Mahdist army which might procure him a too warm welcome when he arrived in Cairo.

Uncle Charlie sent a wire from Assuan, and Colonel Swain was at the Port of Boulak to meet them when they landed. The Colonel received them with open arms, and, not knowing of Dick's wound, gave him a slap on the back that made him wince and exclaim, 'Save us from our friends.' The treasure-chest was borne in triumph to Shephard's Hotel, and after Uncle Charlie and the boys were settled in their old quarters, the Colonel took the missionary to the offices of the Intelligence Department, and when the boys next saw him they hardly recognised their old friend and fellow-captive—the 'Man of Mystery.' He was clad in a brand-new suit of European clothes; and, though he was still worn and feeble-looking, the hunted expression had gone out of his eyes. He shook them warmly by the hand, and spoke of their adventures, summing up the matter by saying, 'It goes very nice now: as the Shakespeare says, "All's well that ends well."' Afterwards, the boys were presented by Colonel Swain to Major Wingate, Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, and did not find it the ordeal they had expected: he called them 'plucky young rascals,' and the points of his fierce moustache went up in an approving smile.

Then Uncle Charlie gave his triumphal dinner at Shephard's. Half-a-dozen English residents with whom he was acquainted were present, and an eminent Egyptologist. Of course, Colonel Swain and the missionary were there. Lieutenant Maitland, to their surprise, put in an appearance, and even Major Wingate looked in for a short time. Uncle Charlie insisted that Selim should be one of the guests: 'Often enough we have eaten from the same plate,' he said, 'and Selim is going to be one of us on this occasion.' The Professor made a speech, which, it must be admitted, lost a great deal of its dramatic effect from the fact that the orator had to be seated in his chair on account of his leg. He was greatly surprised at his own eloquence, but unfortunately touched too feelingly on what he owed to Selim's devotion when helpless in the Scrib's chamber, and that stupid old Selim blubbered and had to go outside.

The discovery of the papyri and tablets caused some sensation. There were accounts of the find in the London daily papers, and a controversy which lasted some time in the more learned of the Reviews. The Professor was lionised in some quarters; in others, the discovery was received with coolness as not adding much to our knowledge of ancient Egypt.

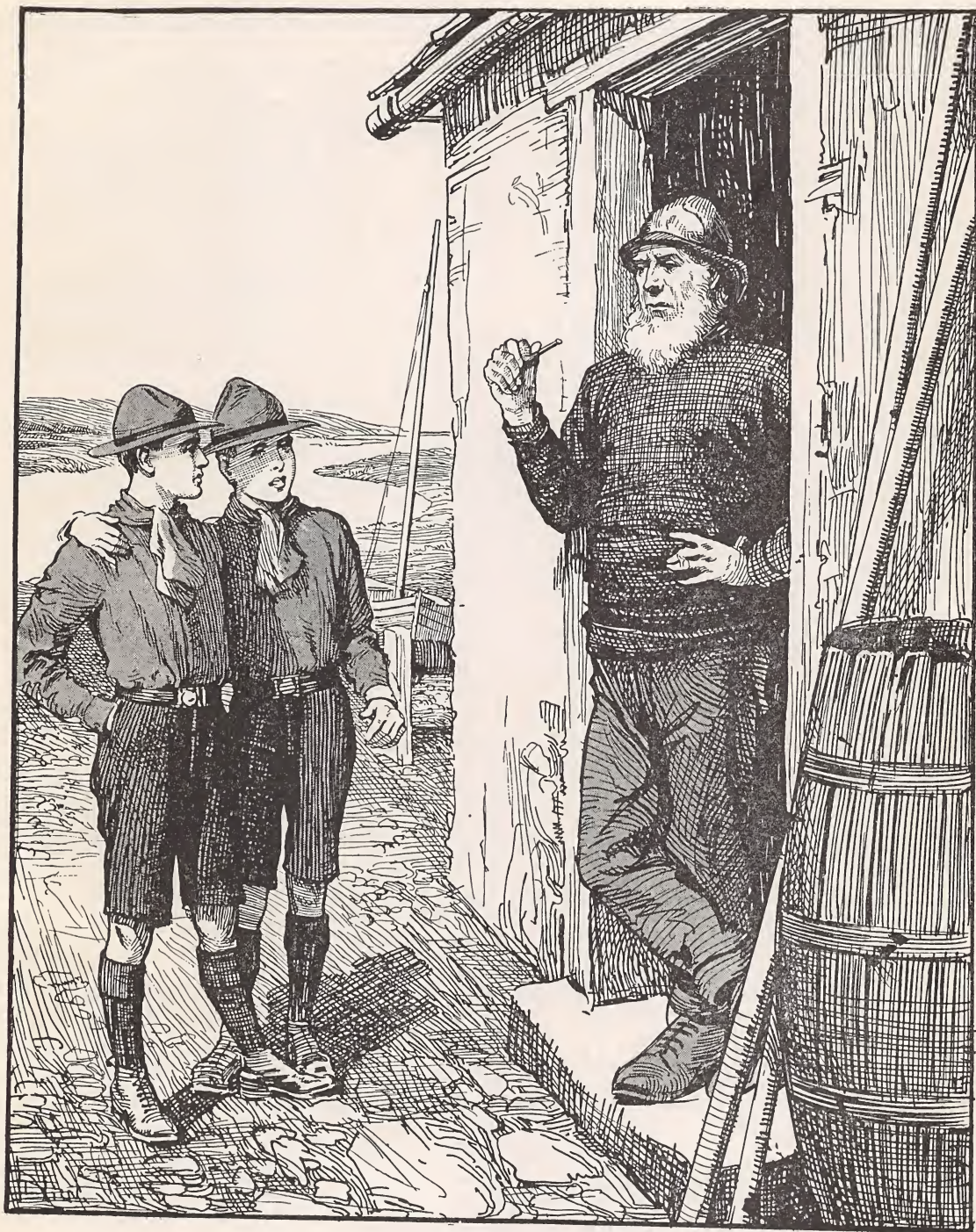
Uncle Charlie and the boys often talk over their adventures, but when they mention Abdulla, a not unfruitful silence falls on them, and the Professor sums up their thoughts in his former words, 'He lived faithfully and he died nobly: what can you have better?' But in Dick's ear the silence sings with a personal note—'English boy Dick, you have the good heart, be calm. God is above all'.

WILLIAM RAINERY.

THE END.



"The treasure-chest was borne off in triumph."



"Old Tompkins was upset about something."

AN UNEXPECTED FIND.

TOM and I are chums; we are in the same form for one thing, so that we see plenty of each other in school hours, and besides that we are both Scouts, and as keen as we can be, so that out of school we are generally together too, with plenty of plans and all sorts of things on hand. It cannot be wondered at that last half-term holiday found us together. We had plenty to talk about, too, and so had every one in the village just at that time, for there had been the biggest robbery you can imagine at The Grange—that's the house where the Squire lives, and every one was keen, I can tell you, to trace the burglars.

But it wasn't so easy: the house had been broken into at night, a lot of jewellery had been taken besides plate, and some frightfully valuable papers, that the Squire said were worth everything else together, and though he had offered a reward, and the police were doing their utmost, and we had had a detective down from Scotland Yard (so you can see no stone had been left unturned), there was not a trace of a clue anywhere.

The Scoutmaster was awfully keen for one of us to track the thieves; there were not many Scouts in our village just then, and he said that lots of other chaps would join, he thought, if he succeeded. For that reason alone, if not for the sake of helping the Squire, which we wanted to do, of course, we would have done our very best to catch the thieves; but so far not a bit of luck had we had. The jewels were gone and everything else; the thieves had gone and left not a trace behind them. The only thing to do was to keep our eyes open and 'be prepared.'

This was what Tom and I were talking about when we strolled down to the river edge on the holiday. It was a July day, and a hot one, and after we had lain about a bit in the sun, we thought we could talk things over better still if we were to charter a boat and take a row down the river.

Now, we're both fond of the Nancy May: she's a trim little craft that old Tompkins has, and we always go for that particular boat when we have a free afternoon, therefore it was not long before we were knocking up the old boatman to hire it.

'Hulloa, Tompkins,' I said; 'can we have the Nancy May for an hour? We will bring her back safe and sound.'

It didn't take much to see that old Tompkins was upset about something; he came to the door in what was, for him, almost a rage, and he glowered at us as if we were criminals.

'Likely as not I shall hire out my boats no more this season,' said he. 'Likely as not! And my Nancy May broken her painter and gone down the river with the tide, and got washed out to sea, most like. I won't run any risks with the others.'

We felt for him most awfully; his boat was the neatest and lightest little craft; and we offered to take another and go off in search of her, thinking she had just broken loose. But it appeared she had been lost for nearly a week.

'If you hadn't been so taken up with the robbery at The Grange you would have heard about it,' grumbled old Tompkins, 'and now her only chance is that maybe she will be towed in by a fishing-boat and have to be painted afresh.'

He seemed so disconsolate that we tried to cheer him up. 'Never mind,' we said, 'let's hope for the

best. Have you got any more boats in, Tompkins? As it's our holiday, you know—'

Well, in a quarter of an hour we had talked him over and borrowed the Mary Ann. Now the Mary Ann is as heavy a tub as you can wish to see, and we had only a pair of clumsy sculls that needed a heap of knack to pull with them at all. But, as Tom said, 'It's awfully good for our muscles!' so we both took an oar and did the best we could.

At first the tide was with us; we live on the bank of the river Adar, just where it widens out into the sea. It has a tremendously wide mouth; you can hardly see the opposite banks at its widest, and the tide is very strong. However, Tom and I are fairly expert with a boat, and we never expected the sort of thing that was in store for us.

To begin with, just as we were thinking of turning—and we were thoroughly tired out, I can tell you, with pulling the old tub against the tide—what did the tide do but turn too! Of course we might have had the sense to study the tides, but we hadn't, and to find that we had all that hard work to do over again was just a bit too much.

Then, if you'd believe it, just as we were turning the boat, Tom caught a crab, and let go of his oar, and there it went floating off, and for the life of me I couldn't pull the boat after it.

'Look at that!' said Tom, feeling pretty desperate, 'I could hear from his voice; 'here, give me the oar, I'm stronger than you.'

But I wouldn't give it up. For all I knew, he might do the same thing again. I held on to the remaining scull and pulled with all my might.

But after a minute it was plain to both of us that we were not making any headway at all. Tom clambered over and came and pulled with me, but still we were quite unable to pull against the current. 'There's no doubt about it,' I said at last: 'we're not strong enough to pull this heavy tub with one oar against the tide. We are going out to sea, that's plain, just as fast as we can, and the best thing we can do is to face it.'

(Concluded on page 387.)

THE LANGUEDOC CANAL

THOUGH we have many canals in Great Britain, and some of them are useful and important, they do not take so large a part in the carrying of our goods as the canals of many other countries do in the carrying of theirs. For various reasons we prefer railways to canals. One reason is that the distances in a small country like ours are usually short, and it is not very costly to make railways from one important town to another. For the same reason the rivers are usually short, and short rivers are nearly always small and unsuited for ships or large boats. But in a country like Germany, which has large rivers such as the Rhine, Weser, Elbe, Oder, Vistula, and Danube, with all their great tributaries, it is sometimes possible for small ships or large barges to go hundreds of miles up into the country, and thus reach cities and towns which are very far from the sea. This river traffic gives great encouragement to the construction of canals from one river to another, and thus a vast network of waterways is formed, and large quantities of goods are carried hither and thither by water, rather than by rail.

The absence of large rivers in England has, I think, always hindered the use and development of our

canals. Although one or two canals were made in England in very early times, it was not until the Duke of Bridgewater made his canal to Manchester, about 1766, that we began to realise the true value of canals in trade and commerce. Long before this, however, one or two other countries had constructed large and useful canals, and given us examples—which we were slow to copy!

One of the earliest, and one of the most wonderful of these foreign canals, was the great Languedoc Canal in the south of France. This canal affords a good illustration of the way in which canals depend upon rivers. A glance at a map of France shows us that the river Garonne rises in the Pyrenees, and after flowing northwards as far as Toulouse, takes a sharp bend to the north-west, and flows out to the Bay of Biscay. At Toulouse it is a large river, and it is at that point much nearer to the Mediterranean Sea than the Bay of Biscay. As long ago as 1539, or earlier, the idea of cutting a canal from Toulouse to the Mediterranean Sea, and thus making a waterway quite across the country from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, occurred to several Frenchmen. The undertaking was, however, too difficult for them, and though other men took up the project from time to time and a survey was made about the year 1600, the task remained beyond the powers of the engineers of those days.

About fifty years later, however, an almost unknown but clever man took up the scheme, and carried it through. This man was Pierre Paul Riquet. He was born at Beziers, near Narbonne, in 1604. He had been a tax-collector, and had retired to an estate at the foot of the Black Mountain in the Cevennes. He was living on the highest part of the ground over which the projected canal must pass. One of the chief difficulties in the construction of the canal was to find water to fill the higher parts of it. If it could have been kept to low ground all the way, it could have been filled with water from many rivers. But in order to get over the high ground which lay between the Mediterranean and the Garonne, the canal had to rise to a height of about six hundred feet above sea-level by means of a series of locks. At this height the larger rivers and streams were left behind, and there remained only the little mountain torrents to supply water for the canal. Riquet made a long and careful study of the district, and came to the conclusion that, by means of suitable ditches and a reservoir, sufficient water could be collected for the purpose. He employed a workman to cut a number of trial ditches, and afterwards engaged an engineer to prepare a careful plan, showing how the water could be collected from the slopes of the Black Mountain.

Having fully convinced himself that his plan was practicable, Riquet sought to obtain the help of important people. One of these was Colbert, the chief minister of Louis XIV., who was so interested in Riquet's project that he obtained from the King an order for a careful investigation to be made in 1663. Meanwhile, Riquet had begun a trench at his own expense for supplying water to the canal.

The difficulty of finding money for the construction of the canal delayed the work for some time; but in 1666 a decree was signed by the King, and Riquet set to work. Six months later there were over four thousand men at work in different places. In spite of frequent delays for want of money, the work went on year after year, and soon a large part of the canal

near Toulouse was completed. Riquet fell ill for a time, and the work was carried on by his eldest son until he was well again. When the work had been in progress fourteen years, and was nearly finished, Riquet was taken ill again, and died on October 1st, 1680. His sons carried on the work, and in the following year the canal was finished.

The canal is one hundred and eighty miles long, and is one hundred and forty-four feet wide and six feet deep, so that it is large enough for barges and boats of considerable size. Its highest part is six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and it has over a hundred locks. The whole of the work was planned and executed with great cleverness and skill. The undertaking cost in all about one and a quarter million pounds, a very great sum to have been raised at that time. When the difficulties of the work are fully considered, it is almost incredible that it could have been carried out nearly two hundred and forty years ago; and, though quite eclipsed in size and importance by many modern canals, it remains a wonderful monument to the genius, perseverance, and skill of Riquet.

W. A. Atkinson.

ON THE DOWNS.

THE downs an open mirror lie
Beneath the widely arching sky,
And every cloud the wind doth chase
Is seen reflected in their face,
Passing in trembling greys and browns
Over the greenness of the downs.

Hark! what a wealth of music rings!
The lark's song like a fountain springs;
And every little bush and tree
Is a green cup of melody
Whose music showers like dew to meet
The pools of music at our feet.

To distant eyes the downs are seen
An ever-changing sea of green.
Look close where every hollow holds
Its store of reds and blues and golds:
Than a king's jewels brighter glow
The modest flowers that shrink from show.

Here no steep crag nor frowning height
Nor sudden chasm appals the sight:
In rings of green that have no end
Clear light and gentle shadows blend,
And the round sky is kindly curled
About the roundness of the world. E. L. B.

ACROSS THE WATER.

XI.—BRIDGES IN WARFARE.

IN warfare bridges have always played a very important part. Battles have been fought on them again and again, and we read of many instances where an army in retreat has destroyed the bridges behind it in order to hinder the progress of pursuing enemies.

History repeats itself, we all know that; and, at the present time, when the story of the retreat of the English from Mons in August, 1914, is fresh in our memories, it is strange to go back five centuries and



The Devil's Bridge in the St. Gothard Pass.

see how Sir John Froissart, the historian, describes the march of an invading army through France in 1346.

'The English came to Mantes and to Meulan,' he says, 'and at every place along the river of Seine they found the bridges broken. At last they came to

Poissy, and found the bridge broken, but the joists and arches lay in the river. The king lay there five days, and in the mean season, the bridge was made to pass the host without peril.'

The invaders marched on, but soon they found in the Somme a serious barrier, for there the bridges



THE TIMID COLT



The Bridge of Lodi.

were in the hands of the French and were guarded and fortified, 'for the French king had well defended the passages, to the intent that the King of England should not pass the river of Somme.'

The English monarch, Edward III., was 'pensive.' Froissart tells us, when he found the difficulties with which he was faced, but he did not despair. His army forded the river at low tide, and, after a fierce battle, found the way open before them to the great victory of Crecy.

Besides destroying bridges, it is the work of the engineers with an army to repair those which have been cut by the enemy, and, where there are no bridges, to throw temporary ones over impassable rivers. Xerxes built a bridge of boats across the Hellespont in the year 480 B.C. for the passage of his great army, and in every war these pontoon bridges, as they are called, are still used.

Perhaps the most wonderful temporary bridge ever known was that constructed over the river Scheldt by the Spaniards in 1584, when the city of Antwerp was being besieged. It was built by an Italian engineer, and was designed to prevent ships coming up the river and bringing provisions and reinforcements to the beleaguered town.

A very flimsy and primitive temporary bridge was thrown across the Meuse at Dinant during one of Marlborough's campaigns. It is thus described by one of the British soldiers:—

'Of tun barrels together tied fast
A bridge o'er the Maze was soon made.'

The writer goes on to tell how the curious bridge was used every night:—

'Over that barrel bridge our pickets was led,
Right late in the evening tide,
And aye as we stepped those barrels they jouked,
But fast together they bide.'

Later, we hear, some boats were obtained, and a more substantial pontoon constructed.

In English history the records show that several battles have been fought on bridges or near them: perhaps the most important and decisive being the fight at Stamford Bridge in 1066, when the Norwegians were defeated by a Saxon army under King Harold.

The Norsemen, on this occasion, landed on the coast of Yorkshire and marched to Stamford, where they held the bridge over the Derwent. Here they were attacked by the English, who had hurried northward in great haste, for Harold knew that his kingdom was threatened in the south by other invaders, and realised that his crown was at stake. The Norsemen defended their position with great bravery, and one soldier stood at the entrance of the bridge and fought single-handed, keeping the whole of the attacking force at bay. He killed many men, and laughed recklessly when called upon to surrender. At last he was struck by a spear, when the Saxons immediately pushed forward over the bridge and the battle was won, the King of Norway being among the killed. Harold, the victor, then turned and

marched south, only to meet with defeat and death at the battle of Hastings.

Another famous bridge battle was fought more than six hundred years later, when the Covenanters were defeated by a Royalist army under the Duke of Monmouth and Graham of Claverhouse, the 'Bonnie Dundee' of Scottish ballads.

The Covenanters were stationed on the north shore of the Clyde, and defended Bothwell Bridge, which at that time was very narrow, with a gateway in the centre which could be shut and barred. Three hundred men held the bridge, but they were forced back and defeated. This battle is described by Sir Walter Scott in his novel, *Old Mortality*.

In Switzerland, during the war with Napoleon Buonaparte, four great battles were fought on bridges in one year, 1799.

There was the battle at Reichenau; then the great fight, which lasted for two days, in the Muotta ravine, between the French and a Russian army under General Suwaroff; and a third contest, between the French and Austrians, at the Devil's Bridge in the St. Gothard Pass. In this last battle, when the Austrians were attacked, they blew up one of the arches of the bridge, and hundreds of the enemy were thrown into the deep gorge. A month later there was another battle at the same spot, this time between Russians and French.

Bridges figure again and again in the Napoleonic wars, and it was at one of these fights that Buonaparte won his title of 'The Little Corporal.'

This battle took place at Lodi, where the Austrians were defending themselves against the French, but where they had neglected to destroy the wooden bridge across the River Po. Napoleon, seeing the position, determined to force the passage of the river at all costs, and he led his troops with dauntless courage, being himself one of the first to cross the bridge. The French rushed forward after their leader, shouting 'Vive la Republique,' and the Austrians, taken by surprise, fled in confusion. Napoleon himself called this battle 'The terrible passage of the Bridge of Lodi,' but, although the Austrians lost very heavily, only two hundred of the French were killed.

In the records of the Peninsular War we have the story of the bridge at Castro Gonzalo, which Sir John Moore ordered to be destroyed after the British troops had passed over. The work of destruction was begun on October 27th, 1808, half the troops working while the others defended the bridge against the attacks of the enemy. For hours this went on, and at last, as the masonry of the bridge was very strong, Crawford, the English general, determined to blow up part of the structure with gunpowder.

Preparations were made, and then the soldiers who had remained on the further bank of the river made their escape by walking in single file across planks, which had been laid from one broken arch of the bridge to the other. This manoeuvre was carried out safely, although the enemy was near at hand, for the night was very dark, and the noise of the rushing water covered the sounds of movement. When all were in safety the mine was sprung, and the destruction of the bridge completed.

THE LAND OF THE LOOM.

BELGIUM is sometimes called 'the land of the loom,' because it was there that, in the ninth century—the Oriental art of tapestry-making was

first practised in Europe. This art had long been cultivated by Moors and Saracens, and doubtless the first attempts of their Belgian and Flemish imitators were somewhat crude. In time, however, the imitators became originators. Great was their fame, and their work was quite literally worth 'a king's ransom.' In 1396, Sultan Bajazet the First held as prisoner a son of that French king who was called 'Philip the Hardy'; and the ransom demanded for the prince was 'high warp tapestry, worked in Arras, in Picardy,' which was to portray 'good old stories.' Arras itself has become a name for tapestry.

E. Dyke.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By Edna Lake.

(Continued from page 371.)

CHAPTER XIII.

THAT night, when the two girls reached their bedroom, they did not at once undress. For one thing they had a great deal that they wanted to talk about, and for another, both were rather anxious to stay up till the boys set out on their journey to the Manor grounds.

'We shall have lots of time to sleep after they have gone, and it would be nice to see them before they start,' said Norah, who still wished that she was to make one of the exploring party.

'Yes, I wish that they would not go, only there is poor old Jinks to think of,' said Joan. 'It is dreadful for him, if he is really shut in somewhere on the Manor grounds. Do you think that he can possibly be alive still, Norah?'

'Yes, of course. Dead dogs don't bark,' said Norah. 'Don't be nervous, Joan. I am sure the boys can look after themselves well enough. But we will put on our dressing-gowns, and then we can sit and read, or talk, till it is half-past twelve. That's the time that they think of setting out. About what time does your aunt go to bed?'

'Oh, early as a rule, only sometimes she and Father sit up talking,' said Joan, and then she added: 'I wish that Father could get another dispenser. I shall not feel happy till Herr Scharf is away from here. He gives me the creeps. I am sure that he is plotting some mischief or other.'

'Yes, there is little doubt about that,' agreed Norah, and then the two girls fell again to discussing the strange behaviour of the doctor's new dispenser, and his probable connection with the mystery of the silver birch; and from that they got round again to the subject of the lost terrier.

They were talking so eagerly, and were so interested in their conversation, that they did not hear footsteps approaching their door, and it was not until the door-handle was turned that either of the occupants of the room guessed that some one was entering. Joan seized a hair-brush, and became exceedingly busy with her hair, whilst Norah as quickly sat down on the floor and began to take off her boots, so that by the time Aunt Eliza's head and shoulders appeared round the doorway, the two girls, to judge by appearances, had no thoughts besides getting to bed with the least possible delay.

'My dears,' said that lady, mildly, 'you are surely a long time in undressing. It is almost eleven o'clock. I thought that I heard voices, so I came to see if you were still awake.'

'We are undressing, Auntie,' said Joan, rather needlessly, Norah thought.

'Yes, dear, so I see,' said Aunt Eliza. 'But I fear that you have been staying to chatter. Early to bed and early to rise, you know; so now lose no more time.'

Aunt Eliza was very determined, in spite of her gentle manner, and now she very quickly bundled them off to bed. The girls did not dare to protest, for, of course, they could not say what it was that they had been waiting up for. They meant, as soon as Aunt Eliza had gone to her room, to dress again, but, strange to say, as soon as they were comfortably in bed, and their heads on their pillows, they were in the land of dreams. They had had a very busy day, with plenty of exercise in the open air, and this had of course made them sleepy. And eleven o'clock was long past their usual bed-time, so that it is not surprising that neither stirred when the boys crept past their door on the way downstairs.

Norah was the first to wake, and when she opened her eyes it was to find the bright morning sun streaming in at the window, instead of the moon-light that she had expected to see.

'Oh, dear! how annoying!' she exclaimed. 'We haven't been to see the boys set off. Why, it is ever so late—almost seven o'clock,' she added aloud, consulting her watch that she drew out from under her bolster.

'What's the matter?' asked Joan, in a sleepy voice, half-aroused by Norah's conversation, and only dimly grasping what the other was talking about.

'Why, we are a pair of sleepy-heads. What do you think, it is actually morning and we didn't go to see the boys off last night. I know I did not expect to sleep a wink, and here we have been fast asleep the whole of the time,' explained Norah, beginning to dress in a great hurry.

'Oh, how funny! I didn't think I should go to sleep, either, with the boys going off to the Manor,' said Joan, beginning to follow Norah's example, and to dress with all speed. 'They ought to be back by now,' she added. 'I wonder if they found out anything about poor old Jinks?'

'Yes, or the mystery,' answered Norah. 'As soon as we are dressed, let's go and find them. They will be awfully sleepy, I expect, but I am sure that they won't mind waking up to tell us all about it.'

The girls soon finished dressing, and made their way to the rooms occupied by their brothers. But on entering these, after repeated knocking on the doors had produced no result, they discovered that the rooms were untenanted.

'Perhaps they have got up and gone out, or they may be up in the play-room,' suggested Norah, at once, when Joan was beginning to say that something must have happened to them.

'We will go and look, and very likely, if they are not indoors, they will come in in a few minutes,' finished Norah cheerfully, and with that Joan and she went up to the attic to commence their search.

But the boys were not in the attic. Indeed, there was no sign of them anywhere in the house, and when the girls had examined all the rooms that they might possibly find them in, they went into the garden, and looked in all the likely places there. But still there was no sign of the missing boys, and even Norah was getting a little anxious, although she refused to admit this to Joan.

'We will take one more look in the attic,' she said,

as they re-entered the house. 'I can smell toast, and that means that breakfast is almost ready.'

Once more they mounted the stairs to the attic, but on entering the room they found it was empty, as it had been on their first visit, and there was nothing about the room to suggest that the boys had entered it since their other visit.

Norah's heart sank, but she determined not to let Joan see that she was worried, so she said lightly, 'They must have gone to breakfast at the Manor, don't you think so?' turning to her companion with a merry smile. But there was no smile on the face of the other.

'They must have been discovered,' said Joan, in a horrified voice.

'Oh, I would not think that if I were you,' said Norah, hopefully. 'I think we had better go down and have breakfast, and then if they do not turn up—'

'Yes,' put in Joan: 'if they don't come in then we will find Auntie and tell her. I do wish Father were at home. He would know what to do.'

Aunt Eliza did not appear, so they had the room to themselves, saying that the boys would perhaps be in later, when one of the maids asked where they were.

'I should like to know if Herr Scharf is coming up this morning,' said Norah, taking some marmalade as she spoke. 'If he does not appear, I shall think that they have found out they were watched, and have made off.'

'He usually gets here at nine,' said Joan. 'I will go and look in a few minutes, and then if he does not come we might go down to Mrs. Bedford's to ask—'

She paused here, for at that moment Mary came into the room and said, 'If you please, Miss Joan, Mrs. Bedford has sent up to say, did Herr Scharf spend the night here, for he hasn't been in?'

'Why, no, Mary. What can have happened to him?' said Joan in great surprise.

'Well, Mrs. Bedford said that she thought perhaps, with the Doctor's being away, he had had to stay to answer the night-bell,' said the maid, 'but I told her I didn't think so.'

'We don't know anything about him, Mary,' said Joan, and the maid left the room looking much puzzled.

'Now we know,' said Norah, in tones of great conviction, when Mary was out of earshot.

'That is just what I don't see,' said Joan, in a troubled voice. 'It seems to me that things get more and more difficult to understand every moment.'

'Oh, what I meant was that now we know that something has really happened—' began Norah; but she got no further, for at that moment the door opened and two figures appeared on the threshold—such dirty, torn, and generally dishevelled figures they were, that for a moment the two girls, who had sprung to their feet when the door opened, did not recognise them.

'Oh, Raymond!' cried Norah.

'Jim, is it really you?' echoed Joan, as the truth dawned on them simultaneously.

'Where is Stanley? Has he not come home?' asked Raymond at once.

'Why, no; is he not with you?' cried the two girls in dismay.

'No, he has not been with us at all. We thought he had got away safely. What can have happened to him?' said Raymond in an anxious tone.

(Continued on page 386.)



"Aunt Eliza very quickly bundled them off to bed."



"His foot caught in a bramble, and he fell headlong."

THE SILVER BIRCH.

By EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 383.)

CHAPTER XIV.

HERR SCHARF and his companion had heard what Stanley said, or at all events they had heard that some one was talking, and knew, therefore, that they were observed. This was clear to all three of the boys, and there was not the slightest room to hope that the two men were not coming towards them. Something they must do, and that at once, if they wished to escape.

'Quick, backwards!' said Stanley, in as low a whisper as he could manage, and yet make what he said audible to the others.

They commenced a backward movement, very slowly and stealthily, through the bushes. The unfortunate part of it was that they were hampered by the need for quietness, while their pursuers had nothing to hinder their progress, except their own clumsiness.

They had evidently gathered, from the sounds they had heard, just where the boys were, and now they came on straight for the spot.

'Divide,' whispered Raymond, and this seemed the wisest course, for then if one were caught the other two need not be.

They each struck out in a different direction, but having to move so cautiously it was impossible to hope to keep ahead of their pursuers, and it was only a moment or two before there came to each of the boys the conviction that their only safety lay in speed, and that however much commotion they might make, it behoved them to take to their heels and outdistance the enemy rather than attempt to dodge them. They had not sufficient start for this latter course to prove successful; but, on the other hand, they were all good runners, and that was something very greatly in their favour.

Accordingly they each made a dash for liberty, in the direction that seemed least likely to land them in difficulties later on. Stanley made for the tree by which they entered the grounds, and Jim went off at right angles to him, whilst Raymond took the same course as Stanley. It was bright moonlight, and this served to show the boys up to their pursuers.

'You take that one, and I'll manage these others,' said the man who was with Herr Scharf. 'We shall have to settle them, I can see, or there may be trouble. Quick after him!'

Herr Scharf took the advice, and went after Jim at a rate that seemed very little in keeping with his stoutness. The way that he got over the ground really was surprising, and Jim, hampered by his incomplete knowledge of the place, was soon at a loss as to which direction to take.

He felt Herr Scharf gaining on him, and wondered dimly if he recognised him. Just when this thought came to him his foot caught in a bramble and he fell headlong. That was the end of the chase, as far as he was concerned, and the next thing that he knew was that he was being carried somewhere and placed in a vehicle standing outside the walls of the Manor. He heard some one say, 'There's another to come now,'

but after that he knew nothing more, for one of the men held something to his face—something that smelt very queer, and gave one the strangest dreams imaginable.

Raymond also was soon caught, for he had the misfortune to get close to the wall, and in a corner as well, from which there was no means of escape open to him. The man whom they had seen so often in company with the dispenser was strong, and lifted him easily, though he kicked and struggled with might and main. Then the man produced something from one of his pockets and tied it over the boy's face, and in a moment or two he was unconscious.

Seeing his struggles cease, the man lifted him once more and took him to where the motor stood, near the entrance to the lane.

Here also was Herr Scharf, and together they held a consultation. 'I haf send Jacques to get de oder one,' said that worthy; 'den he vill drive off, is it not so, an' leave dem in some lonely place?'

'This night's work is at an end, Herr Scharf,' replied the other. 'I saw a light just now, and it is my belief that something is known. We shall have to get out of this. As it is I am not supposed to be seen on the premises, for Haverford said that night that he would shoot me like a dog if he caught me on his grounds again; and he would do it. He is mad.'

'But what of dis secret? We haf got so near to it,' protested the other.

'You can come again if you like, but I'm going to clear out. I don't care how much it is worth to you. I'm not goi g to risk my life. And you'll have made the place too hot for you. Those are the Doctor's boys, two of them.'

'I know. I haf no liking for dem. They—how you call it?—spy, yes, dat's it. I haf seen dem, an' I am glad dat they are well made to fear. I shall not go to their fader, the doctor, again; but I shall come by night. I vill not go widout de papers.'

'Hush! What is that?' asked the other in a startled whisper.

'Dat is Jacques. Haf you got him?' he went on, addressing the tall young fellow who at that moment came into sight up the lane.

'No, there is no trace of him; but there is some one moving about in the grounds—some one with a light,' replied the man, in very good English, for all that he had a French name. 'We had better go before it is too late.'

'Ver well; it is vexing, a d he must be there. But still—'

What Herr Scharf had meant to say next was not said, for at that moment a revolver was fired off—once, twice, three times—close to them, warning them that it was high time that they were off, if they intended to get away with whole skins.

They sprang into the car beside the driver, while their still unconscious captives had the tonneau all to themselves. The young man called Jacques drove, and the car sped noiselessly along the quiet country roads, soon leaving the Manor far behind.

But accidents will happen to the best-regulated cars, and this one was no exception to the general rule. They had gone only half a dozen miles before one of the front tyres burst and the car sidled across the road like a crab, and, after a little zig-zagging, came to a standstill.

There was a good deal of cursing amongst the men sitting in the front seat, and the two who were not driving blamed the one who was, and he in his turn showered abuse on them both, so that there was a lot of noise and confusion.

(Continued on page 398.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

ANSWER TO CHARADE ON PAGE 355.

Million.

1. Mill. 2. I. 3. On.

AN UNEXPECTED FIND.

(Concluded from page 378.)

WE thought the matter over. In ten minutes we should be right out of the river-mouth; no boat was likely to see us, and there seemed no way of signalling to the far-off banks; we had tried to steer towards them, but it was too far, and the tide was too strong, and there didn't seem anything to do but just let ourselves drift.

I, for one, was thinking that the adventure seemed likely to be a pretty dangerous one, when, all of a sudden, Tom gave a whistle; 'I say,' he said, 'I wonder if we could do it!'

'Do what?' I asked rather gruffly; I wasn't in a mood for any kind of chaff. 'Do you see any way out of this? If so, buck up and let's hear it.'

Then Tom told me that years before he had been taken down almost to the sea by an uncle who had tied the boat up on a small island, where they had tea or something. 'It must be a bit further on,' said Tom, 'though I've never been so far down the mouth from that day to this, but I remember the place perfectly. It was a bushy sort of island where blackberries grew, and it was right in the middle of the mouth. It is difficult to see the opposite shores from it.'

Well, there was a sort of a ghost of a hope that we might be able to steer the boat towards it, if we were so fortunate as to come any way near to the place. 'Be prepared!' sang Tom, and we made ourselves ready.

It wasn't so long, either, before we *did* see the island. It was, just as Tom said, as lonely a little place as you could wish to see, overgrown with bushes, and not likely to be visited for weeks.

I said this to Tom, but he was quite cheery. 'Anyhow, there are caves,' he said. 'I remember them from last time, and with blackberries, you know—'

Any more words that he might have had to say on the subject were suddenly changed to a whistle of dismay, for the only remaining scull snapped in my hands just as I had managed to turn the boat in the direction of the island. And there we were with the old tub on our hands.

But Tom wouldn't see the black side. Instead of grumbling, he took half an oar, and I took the other, and together we did manage to turn the boat's head; and in a minute or so—with the help of the tide, too, of course, which was racing us pretty much in the right direction—bump we went on a few little rocks that lay round the little island.

It didn't take a minute to leap out; it took a good many minutes to drag up the *Mary Ann* so that she

shouldn't get carried away. Then we made tracks for the cave, over the sand to the other side of the island, for we both wanted to find out whether there was a place we could spend the night in, supposing such a thing were necessary.

I don't know how it was that we weren't talking and ragging each other as we went; perhaps we were a bit knocked out with the time we had had. As it was, we ran over the sand pretty noiselessly, and it wasn't till we had reached the other side, and were just outside the cave itself, that all of a sudden we had the surprise of our lives.

In the cave was a man—a man seated, and calmly smoking, and—would you believe it?—while he smoked he was engaged in counting over and messing about some jolly valuable-looking ornaments that glittered and sparkled in the sun!

It was Tom who twigged; he is much quicker than I am. As soon as we were out of sight of the cave and behind some rocks he had plenty to say. 'See what he's doing?' he whispered. 'He's the thief, right enough; and he's taking the Squire's jewels out of their settings. I've heard that thieves do that before they try to sell the stones, and —'

'But, I say,' I began;—*that* was all right; but what I wanted to know was how the man had got there, and also, where did *we* come in? 'We shan't be able to give him up to justice if we're stuck here in this island,' I said.

'We shan't be for long,' said Tom.

He turned as he spoke, and began to slink round the little island, keeping out of the way of the cave where the thief was at work. At last he seized my arm. 'See over there!' he whispered, and, if you will believe it, there was a boat pulled up high and dry on to the sand!

In five minutes we'd run her down into the water, in six we had started plying her sculls, and as we started I said: 'Then *this* is where the *Nancy May* had got to!'

For it was the *Nancy May* herself. The thief had been clever enough to outwit poor old Tompkins. He had evidently made away, after the robbery, in the old man's boat, and whether he ever meant to return it or not I'd rather not inquire.

It was a lovely row we had back; the *Nancy May* went like a bird. We each had a scull, and, though the tide was against us, we seemed to get along like greased lightning. Only, every now and then, one of us would stop for a minute and rest on his oar and roar with laughter to think of what the thief would say when he found that the old tub, *Mary Ann*, with her two broken halves of an oar, was the only craft left to him!

'We have him high and dry until the police arrive,' said Tom; 'there'll be no escaping from the island, unless he casts himself adrift on the open sea, with the tide running out. I'm inclined to think he will prefer to give himself up.'

Tom was right. When we had delivered up the *Nancy May* to the astonished Tompkins, and had made our way with our strange story to the Grange, there was not much waste of time before the police-boat was sent out, and after that the capture was short work.

The Squire was so grateful to us that he wanted to present Tom and me with some huge reward, but, of course, being Scouts, we wouldn't hear of it, and I'm glad to say he didn't press it. What did happen, though,



"He was engaged in counting over some jolly valuable-looking ornaments."

was better than any reward: both his sons joined the Scouts that very week, and, as a result, all the village boys who had held off joined, too; and now we have

the biggest Scout corps in the county. And all because of the robbery at the Grange! Good out of evil, as Tom says.

E. TALBOT.



“‘Such an absurdly plain and simple notion could not have occurred to me.’”

WHICH WAS THE FOOL?

THERE is an ancient story of a wise man who, although innocent of any crime, was imprisoned by order of his king.

‘In prison,’ said the hard-hearted monarch, ‘he shall stay until he can find out with his own wise brains how to set himself free.’

The king despised philosophers. But some kind people were sorry for the poor old man, and begged the

king to let him out of prison. 'He has done nothing wrong, your majesty,' they pleaded; 'and he has been there so long!'

'Then let him find the way out,' said the king, quite unmoved.

Week followed week, and the philosopher was still a prisoner. He was always trying to invent some means of regaining his freedom, but without success. What could he do, he thought, with neither money nor tools? So he wept, and wrung his hands; but *that* was of no use.

One morning, when, as usual, he was racking his brains to devise some plan of escape, he heard a cheery whistle outside. It came from the lips of a passing ploughboy. The boy peeped in at the window, to see who could be living in such a gloomy place. The wise old man spoke to him. 'Ah!', he said, with a sigh, 'it is easy to sing when you are free!'

'Well, can't *you* be free?' asked the ploughboy. 'Why do you sit moaning and groaning here?'

'I am in prison,' replied the sage, sadly. 'My door is locked and barred, so that I cannot get out. I have no friends, no money, no tools, therefore, so far as I can see, I shall have to remain here for the rest of my life.'

'But,' said the boy, 'if the door is locked and barred, what does that matter? You could get out of the window. See how easily it opens!'

'My lad,' said the 'wise' man, 'such an absurdly plain and simple notion could not have occurred to me. However—'

And without more ado he hopped out of the window, which the boy had thrown open.

'Well!' said the youngster to himself, as he gazed after the retreating figure, 'if *that* is philosophy, I'll do without it.'

How heartily the king laughed when he heard the story!
E. D.

TU-WHIT! TU-WHOO!

BBROWN OWL, is it true you can see in the dark,
While I am asleep,
And fairies are dancing with elves in the park?
O owl, do you peep?

Nurse says little sparrows lie quiet in their nest
In case you should hear:
And even tame Robin will hid his red breast—
Why, owl, do they fear?

High up, yesterday, on the branch of a tree
A brown something sat,
It looked like a pussy-cat blinking at me,
O owl, who was that?

There, winking and blinking your two sleepy eyes,
As the sun shone through,
You turned round your head, and I saw with surprise,
Brown owl, it was you!

To-night I shall wake when you fly by and call
Tu-whit! and Tu-whoo!
To fairy-land—if you are going at all—
Dear owl, take me too!

EDITH E. MILLARD.

'THEY'RE OFF!'

THERE'S a crack of a pistol, a shout of 'Stand back!' The stewards are pushing the boys from the track. There's a shout of 'They're off!' and a straining of eye, And a craning of necks as the runners flash by. Yes! they're off, every one, both the strong and the weak, the braggart, the boaster, the modest, the meek, And shouts rend the air from the friends by the rope, And some are dejected, some buoyed up by hope.

They've long been in training, for races like this Are not given away like a lightly-blown kiss— The bodies kept under with temperate fare, The heart that is anxious, the nonchalant air. But they're off, yes, they're off, now or never's the word; And the feet speed along o'er the green velvet sward. Well, the best man will win, and his laurels home bring, But the glorious uncertainty—that is the thing.

How well they are running, how steady, how fast! There's hardly a yard 'twixt the first and the last. Ah! see, one falls out, for his strength is soon spent, They are leading him tenderly into the tent. For though all may strive, yet not all reach the goal, Though the one that's defeated may proud be of soul. And though all are starters, not all breast the rope; There's the sigh of despair, the elation of hope.

So is it in life, for all life is a race, And some fall behind, some maintain a front place. All, all are the starters, with hope in the soul— They're off like the racers, success is the goal. Let us give them a cheer, let us hearten each one, May they all reach the goal ere the set of life's sun. Let us hold up the weak if they stagger or fall, There's the prize for the victors, but honour for all.

FRANK ELLIS.

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

XI.—MONS.

MONS, the name has become familiar to us of late, the sound of it brings to our mind many sad and yet inspiring memories. We think of a tragic death-roll, and long lists of wounded and missing, and we remember stories of desperate fighting against overwhelming odds, of individual heroism, of marvellous fortitude, and of a great disaster that was as glorious as a victory.

Before the autumn months of 1914, many people in England knew very little about Mons, beyond the fact that it was near the French frontier, and yet the place has figured again and again in history. It has been besieged, bombarded, and captured, its inhabitants have been murdered and cruelly ill-treated, it has belonged now to one country and now to another, and several great and decisive battles have been fought to a finish in its near neighbourhood.

In mediæval times many Englishmen knew the city well, for there was a very close alliance between Hainault, of which it is the capital, and our own country. Sir John of Hainault, as Froissart calls him, the ruler

of the province, assisted Edward III. in his warlike enterprises, and later Edward married his niece, the fourteen-year-old Princess Philippa.

In the sixteenth century, when the great rebellion of the Low Countries against Spain took place, Mons, owing to its position near the French frontier, became of great importance and was strongly fortified.

In 1572 the city was still under Spanish rule, but Count Louis of Nassau determined to capture it. Many of the citizens secretly sympathised with the cause of the patriots, and these men were provided with weapons and ammunition which Louis caused to be carried through the gates hidden in wine barrels. The arms were distributed secretly, and then one night the guardians at the gate were overpowered, the keys stolen, and the Count, with a band of soldiers, admitted into the city. In the dusk of early summer morning, Louis and his men rode through the streets, rousing the townspeople, and when, later on, reinforcements arrived, he took possession of Mons in the name of the Prince of Orange.

King Philip of Spain and his great general, the cruel Duke of Alva, were enraged when they heard what had happened, and swore to punish the city for its insubordination. This threat was carried out in a terrible way. Mons was besieged by a large Spanish army, and although it held out for a long time, and proved, as an old historian writes, to have 'stronger teeth than Alva supposed,' in the end it was obliged to surrender, and the hapless inhabitants were ruthlessly massacred.

The name of the town, Mons, is taken from the French word Montaigne, and it is situated on a hill and surrounded with woods and fertile fields. At first the besieging army was some way from the city, and as they had only small supplies of food, the defenders determined to sally out and gather in the harvest which was just ready. This plan proved a failure, a battle took place, the troops of Louis of Nassau were defeated, and then the Spanish army drew nearer to the city, and held it more closely in its grip.

Many attempts were made to relieve Mons, both by the French and by the Prince of Orange, but these were all unsuccessful, and at last, when starvation seemed very near, the gallant defence of the city came to an end.

Count Louis did his best for his unfortunate adherents, and good terms were arranged; but the Spanish leaders broke all their promises and the town was given into the hands of Alva. The city was surrendered in September and for many months there was a reign of terror in Mons; hundreds were executed and, in the end, the whole place was pillaged ruthlessly by the Spanish and German soldiers of the victorious army.

For many years after this time the famous fortress remained in Spanish or Austrian hands, but it was again and again besieged by the French. In 1680 it was defended against the enemy so gallantly and successfully that the King of Spain, Charles, rewarded each member of the Corporation with a peerage.

Eleven years later, however, during the war between France and the allied nations of England, Spain, Holland, and Germany, Louis XIV. managed to gain possession of the town, employing an immense army that numbered no less than 100,000 men.

It was in the spring that the French marched northward to the frontier of Hainault, and the 'Grand

Monarch' commanded his forces in person, for he had resolved to capture the city and would not entrust the task even to one of his most experienced generals. The siege began early in March and the walls of the city were fiercely bombarded.

William III., who was leading the Allies, made great efforts to relieve Mons, but difficulties beset him on every side. The Spanish and German troops were not ready for the opening of the campaign, transports could not be obtained, and messages of encouragement sent to the besieged city were intercepted.

As time went on the citizens of Mons began to despair, and no doubt they were haunted by terrible stories of what had happened a century before, when their city fell into the ruthless hands of a hostile army. Certain it is that the townsfolk urged their leaders to surrender, and even threatened to murder the soldiers of the garrison if this were not done.

On April 20th, therefore, the fortress capitulated, but the surrender only took place when breaches had been made in the walls by the enemy's artillery, when the town was ablaze in ten different places, and when it was quite evident, not only to the despairing citizens but also to those in command, that further resistance was hopeless.

There were great rejoicings in France after this victory, and Louis returned to Paris in triumph.

In 1709, during the War of the Spanish Succession, Mons was besieged by the Duke of Marlborough. This event took place in the autumn, soon after the great battle of Malplaquet, which was fought on September 11th.

In most of the histories written at the time of the campaign, Marlborough is spoken of as if he were quite invincible, and one would gather from these accounts that the siege of Mons and its capture were very simple matters. A Scotch soldier, however, who was in the victorious army, gives a different story of the proceedings, and it is evident that this time too, as on other occasions in its past, there was difficult fighting before the city finally surrendered.

'The French about Mons did us mickle donse,' this candid writer explains, and he goes on to say that in a night attack which was made by the defenders of the beleaguered city 'our small guard of men was all prisoners ta'en, and far more was put to flight.'

The siege of Mons came to an end on the 19th of October, the French hanging out white flags and showing their intention of capitulating, just when the besiegers were preparing to make a fresh attack. This time there was no pillage or cruelty, and the defeated garrison were allowed to march out of the town with their arms.

Since then there have been more sieges and more captures, and during the fierce wars of the French Revolution the frontier fortress changed hands again and again. At no period of its long and eventful history, however, has it witnessed fiercer fighting or more wonderful heroism than in the August days of 1914, when the French and British troops, who had gone to the aid of invaded Belgium, were met in Hainault by the immense armies of Germany, and were driven back, step by step, over their old battlefields of Malplaquet, Landrecies, St. Quintin and Compiègne, until they were able to turn and face their foes at the gates of Paris itself.

A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.



"The guardians at the gate were overpowered."



"She mounted the walls of the city, and standing there, sword in hand, defied the Spaniards."

THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE LOWLANDS.

Tales of some famous Sieges.

XII.—GHENT.

OF all the cities of Belgium, perhaps, the most interesting is Ghent, especially to English people, for from very early times our country and the famous Flemish capital have been closely connected, the alliance having begun in the days when Edward III. held his court in Ghent, and when his wife—herself a Flemish princess—became godmother to Philip, the son of the great soldier-merchant, Jacques van Artevelde.

In earlier days still, however, the relations between England and the Low Countries were less friendly, and in 1297 Edward I., with a great army, besieged Ghent, and was beaten back from the walls by the brave burghers.

Ghent has been attacked and besieged many times in its history, for the citizens have always been noted for their warlike qualities, and, in turbulence and love of liberty, they rivalled even their reckless neighbours of Liège.

The cities of Belgium in mediæval days had many ancient rights and privileges, in defence of which the burghers were ready at any time to take up arms. There were frequent conflicts in Ghent between the citizens themselves, and in addition they often attacked the rival towns of Ypres and Bruges, or rose in open revolt against their feudal lord, the Count of Flanders.

Ghent was a very wealthy city during the fourteenth century, and thus had no difficulty in raising large armies for warlike enterprises or for its own defence. Indeed, it is said to have been able to raise no less than 80,000 men.

Jacques van Artevelde and his son, Philip, were the two chief leaders of the Ghent citizens during this period, and it was while the latter was in power that some of the most important events in the town's history took place.

The city was then in a state of rebellion, and the Count of Flanders, Louis le Mal, determined to besiege and capture it. This was, however, not by any means a simple affair, for, as Sir John Froissart says, Ghent was at that time one of the strongest towns in the world, and it behoved more than 200,000 men to invest it.

The siege began in the summer-time, but Louis soon discovered the difficulties that were before him, for the country round was favourable to Ghent, and supplies of food were brought from Brussels and from Liège to the city, while, in addition, the soldiers of the garrison made sallies from time to time, and took possession of the neighbouring towns of Alost, Grammont, and Dendemonde.

At last the Count raised the siege and retired to Bruges, but he did not lose sight of his project, and in 1382 the city was once more invested.

This time Louis had succeeded in subduing the greater part of the surrounding districts, and he forbade provisions to be sent into Ghent. Before many months had passed the town was reduced to the verge of starvation.

Philip van Artevelde, who had been chosen by the citizens as their leader, did everything in his power to help the unfortunate townfolk, but the famine became more and more severe, and finally it was decided that an appeal for mercy must be made to the Count of Flanders.

This resolve was put into execution at once, but Louis le Mal had no pity for his rebellious subjects, and declared that, if they wanted peace, they must humiliate themselves before him, the principal citizens coming to him bareheaded, with halters round their necks and with the keys of the city gates in their hands. Even if this were done, the haughty feudal sovereign did not promise that the lives of the culprits should be spared.

There was great consternation in Ghent when the hard decree was made known, but Philip van Artevelde showed himself a true hero in the terrible crisis. 'There are three courses open to us,' he said to his fellow-citizens: 'We can either starve like martyrs within the walls, we can accept the offered disgrace, or we can arm ourselves, issue out from the city, and attack the Count in his quarters at Bruges. And if we die in this voyage,' he added, 'it shall, at least, be called honourable.'

The brave burghers did not hesitate in their choice, and a few days later five thousand men marched out of the town on their hazardous adventure. The starving people who remained behind, meanwhile, were no less courageous than their fellows, for they gave up the whole of the remaining small stock of food to the fighting men, keeping back nothing, and bidding the warriors farewell with the words: 'Sirs, never think to come hither again, unless you come with honour.'

The enterprise must indeed have seemed a forlorn hope, but nevertheless it met with success, for the hungry burghers of Ghent attacked and fought with the reckless bravery of desperation. In a very short time Bruges was captured, the Count of Flanders a fugitive, and Ghent saved from the terrible prospect of death or disgrace.

In the troubled days of the sixteenth century Ghent took a great part in the struggle for freedom, and, true to her old traditions of courage and independence, she was one of the first Flemish cities to throw off the Spanish yoke.

During the reign of the Emperor Charles V. a great citadel had been erected in the city, in order that the turbulent burghers might be held in subjection to their foreign rulers. In 1570, when the rebellion under William Prince of Orange broke out, this fortress was held by a Spanish garrison, and it was besieged and attacked by the Prince's troops and the townfolk.

The defenders held their own for a long time with wonderful bravery, in spite of furious attacks. When, at last, they were forced by famine to surrender, it was found that their leader was a woman, Señora Mondragon, who had held the citadel in the absence of her husband, until only one hundred and fifty people, including herself and her children, were left alive.

Fourteen years later the city itself was besieged by the Duke of Parma, and, on this occasion, too, if the old stories are true, a woman distinguished herself by her courage and warlike qualities.

Most of us know the stirring old ballad which describes this siege, and remember how:

'When captains courageous whom nothing could daunt,
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt;
They mustered their soldiers by two and by three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.'

The poem goes on to tell us how the brave woman-soldier led three thousand men against the enemy, and fought with them for seven hours, after which she mounted the walls of the city, and, standing there, sword in

hand, defied the Spaniards, and invited them to come out and engage once more in combat.

On this occasion Ghent was besieged for a long time, although Parma, like Louis of Flanders before him, seems to have had great difficulty in preventing provisions being brought into the city. He did everything in his power to prevent this being done, and also attempted to bribe the citizens into surrendering.

In these efforts he was at one period successful, for there were traitors in the beleaguered city who declared that it would be better to give up the struggle than to continue the defence, and perhaps suffer the terrible treatment at the hands of a victorious enemy which had befallen the sister towns of Malines, Mons, and Maestricht.

There was great anxiety in the Low Countries and Holland as to what would be Ghent's decision, but in the end the city stood firm, and it was not until 1584 that it was at last forced to capitulate by famine.

Since then there have been other chapters in the troubled history of the old Flemish city. It was besieged and bombarded with red-hot bullets by the Duke of Marlborough in 1708. Later in the eighteenth century, the citizens, inspired by the example of the French Revolutionists, revolted against their Austrian ruler, only to be quickly subdued, and in 1792 the town was captured by the French, under La Bourdonnais.

A. A. METHLEY, F.R.G.S.

TRACKS IN THE SNOW.

'LOOK sharp, you fellows! it's time we were off,' Stephen shouted from the sleigh, glancing anxiously at the leaden sky and fast-darkening landscape.

His brother and cousin (the latter just out from England) obeyed his summons reluctantly; it did not look inviting outside after the warmth and comfort within. Their friends all trooped out to the doorway to see them off, and their host came down to the sleigh.

'You have your guns, boys, in case you need them,' he said. 'It looks like more snow. Look here, Stephen, I almost think you had better stay the night.'

But the boy shook his head. 'Mother wouldn't like it,' he answered, 'if we didn't come back. You know how she worries.'

The man nodded. 'Yes, I do. Well, good-bye. I hope the snow will keep off; there's one thing—the horses know the way.'

'Good-bye!' The horses, released, sprang away, and the sleigh flew like a fairy thing down the street and out into the silent country.

Stephen was too good a driver to allow his steeds to run themselves out in the first mile or two, but they were so fresh that it was all he could do to hold them in; so it was not until they were well away from the town that he was able to look about him.

At the first glance his trained eye caught sight of something in the snow that sent his heart into his mouth. He spoke over his shoulder to the two behind.

'I say, Dan, do you notice anything?'

'Tracks, you mean?' answered his brother. 'Yes, I saw them some time ago.'

'How you fellows can see anything when you're going at such a pace, I can't think,' laughed Edgar, their cousin. 'What is it, anyway?'

'Wolves,' said Dan, shortly.

'Are you afraid of them? Would they attack you?' 'Rather! Haven't you ever heard of the Canadian wolves?'

'I suppose I have, but I thought it was only in Russia they were fierce.'

'Here too,' answered Dan. 'I only hope we shan't run into them; it's no joke.'

On they flew, to the sound of jingling bells, and another mile had been covered when suddenly Edgar exclaimed: 'What was that?'

Hardly had he spoken, when from far away came a long-drawn, eerie howl.

The horses heard it, and dashed forward with renewed vigour, while Stephen asked over his shoulder: 'Was that what you heard, Ed?'

'No, I didn't think so: it was shriller than that,' answered the boy, puzzled.

'I heard it too,' said Dan, and, springing up, he gave a long call.

Stephen pulled up the steaming horses, much against their will. They all listened. Faintly the answer came to them: decidedly a call for help.

With an exclamation the boy swung the animals round, and away they flew in the direction of the sound.

'Shout again, Dan; we must be sure of the direction,' he said presently; and Dan shouted: 'Hallo! where are you?'

Faintly still, but nearer, came the answer, 'He-e-re!'

'It's a girl, or a woman, at any rate,' said Dan. 'There she is, there she is!' he cried the next minute. 'What on earth has happened?'

The two boys were out of the sleigh in a moment, and ran to the rescue of a girl crouching at the foot of a tree.

'What is it? What's up?' they asked.

'My—my foot!' she gasped. 'It's caught in one of father's traps, and I can't get it out. I didn't know he had any here. I was afraid the wolves would come. Then I heard your bells.'

'A good thing we heard you,' said Dan, forcing the trap open; 'the wolves are about to-night.'

'I know; I heard them. Father's laid up; that's why I had to come. I'm Annie Vernon.'

'Well, you can't walk now; you'd better come with us. We will take you home.'

'But it's out of your way.'

'Don't matter—in with you!' They helped her in and wrapped her up in the rugs.

It was only a matter of three miles to old Martin the trapper's house, and the horses needed no urging to do it in record time, for nearer, and perilously nearer, came the howling of wolves in full cry.

'Shall we do it?' whispered Annie, half fainting, but still aware of their danger.

'Just, please God!' Dan's tone was grim, and he glanced back as they came out from the trees. Only a quarter of a mile behind came the scudding black shapes of the wolves.

On flew the horses, faster and faster, seeming to know that the block-house before them meant safety.

'Is there any one to open the gates, Annie?' called Stephen.

'No.'

'Well, get the guns ready, you fellows, to keep them in check while one of us does it.'

'I will do it; you'd better keep the reins, Steve. If the horses bolt before we get in, we're done.'



"They knelt on the seat, and fired deliberately."

Annie dragged herself to her knees. 'Give me a gun,' she said, and the English boy gazed at her admiringly. 'I say,' he said, 'you've got some pluck! I can shoot too, Dan.'

They knelt on the seat, and fired deliberately into the

advancing mass, while Dan, leaping out, unfastened the heavy gates and flung them back.

'In with you, quick!' he cried; and in they dashed, the gates swinging to with a crash behind them.

'Safe, thank God! And thank God, too, we didn't



"Panting was his heart with fright."

stay the night in Freetown; I'd half a mind to,' laughed Stephen, as he unharnessed the horses.

'It would have been a bad job for me if you had,' said Annie, limping into the house.

'That's so,' answered the boys, soberly following her.

BROWNIE'S FRIGHT.

BRIGHT the summer morn and early,
Sweetly sung the lark on high,
Meadow grass with dew was pearly,
Blue as azure was the sky.

From his burrow came a rabbit,
Skipped along for pure delight,
It was Brownie's usual habit
Thus to seek an appetite.

Soon he met another bunny,
And they talked of this and that,
You may think it very funny—
Did not know that they could chat!

Said his friend, 'Beware of danger,
'Tis not well to be too bold;
Somewhere in the fields is Ranger,
Or, at least, so I am told.'

Answered Brownie, happy-hearted,
'I can run as fast as he,'
Then 'Good-bye,' said they, and parted,
Each as friendly as could be.

Doggie Ranger—fond of gambols,
'Neath the pleasant summer sun—
Chanced to see him in his rambles,
Chased him for a bit of fun.

Scampered Brownie, helter-skelter,
Panting was his heart with fright,
But he safely gained his shelter,
And, as well, an appetite!

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

CURED BY HIS OWN MEDICINE.

A Legend.

THERE was once a peasant who married the daughter of a poor knight.

He loved his wife dearly, but, being an ignorant fellow, he had no idea how ladies ought to be managed, and he was terribly afraid lest while he was away at his work she should make friends with strangers and forget all about him.

Said he to himself, 'Supposing I give my wife a good beating every day before I go out, that will leave her with something to think about while I am away, and there will be no fear of her forgetting me.'

So each morning before he went off to his work he gave his wife a sound beating; but when he came back in the evening he would beg her pardon and treat her kindly and lovingly.

But the wife grew weary of this way of living. 'Alas,' she sighed, 'if my husband were ever beaten himself, I am sure he would find out how unpleasant it is!'

That very moment, as she was drying her tears, there came a rat-tat-tat at the door of the hut; and opening it, she saw a number of richly-dressed strangers.

Said the leader, 'We are in search of a famous doctor who lives somewhere about here. The King's daughter has swallowed a fish-bone, and none of the court doctors can get it out of her throat. This learned man is said to perform the most wonderful operations, and his Majesty has sent us to fetch him at once. Can you direct us to him?'

Now the peasant's wife was feeling very sore, and it occurred to her that here was an opportunity for giving her husband a good lesson.

'No one lives near here,' she said, 'but my husband; and I will both direct you to him and tell you how to manage him when you find him.'

So she gave them instructions, explaining what she called his 'peculiarities'; and they soon succeeded in finding the peasant.

Vainly he protested that he was not a doctor.

'We know all about that,' they rejoined; and two of them set upon him with a stout pair of cudgels so heartily that he agreed to go with them wherever they liked.

'Humph,' said the King, when the churl was brought before him, 'you're a queer-looking doctor—but this is no time for ceremony. Go and operate on my daughter immediately and you shall be richly rewarded.'

'Please, your Majesty,' cried the churl, falling on his knees, 'there's some mistake. I never doctored any one in my life!'

'Oh, we know all about that!' returned the King, for 'the great doctor's peculiarities' had been explained to him. 'However, if you *will* have it——'

He beckoned to the two men with cudgels; and once more they began to belabour the unfortunate man, till he cried out that he would do anything they liked.

So they brought him to the Princess who lay groaning on her couch. Not having the least idea what to do, the unhappy 'doctor' just stood and stared at her, making such woeful grimaces that she began to laugh instead of groaning; and the laughter jerked the fish-bone right out of her throat, and she jumped up, crying out that she was cured.

Then the King made the churl a knight on the spot, and gave him a fine castle and a pile of treasure.

The first thing the new knight did was to send for his wife. And the first thing he said to her was, 'My dear, I promise that I will never, never, never beat you any more; in fact I don't want ever to see a stick again as long as I live!'

He kept his word, and the two lived happily together for ever after.

LILIAN DALTON.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 387.)

IT was just at this point that the two boys came to themselves, and Raymond, taking in the situation very quickly, whispered to Jim that he must on no account let it be known that he was conscious again.

'We can give them the slip in a little while,' said Raymond. 'How do you feel?'

'Pretty rotten, and I've got a headache,' said Jim, who was beginning to think that there were decided drawbacks to this kind of adventure. 'Never mind, that will soon pass off. Just keep still a moment whilst I do a little thinking.'

Truth to tell, Raymond's head ached too, and he had a great difficulty in thinking, but the need to escape from their present plight spurred him on to the effort.

By this time the three men had all got out of the car and were taking off one of the head-lights to examine the injured tyre. This made it all the better for the boys, as one side of the car was left in darkness. By now the moon had passed behind dark rain-clouds, too, and everything contrived to aid them in their escape.

The men were still arguing angrily, when Raymond said, 'Are you ready, because if so, get out on this side—softly does it—and climb down that bank at the side

of the road. We can creep along under that for a little distance.'

It was in their favour that the road here was considerably above the level of the fields that ran alongside it. The two boys got stealthily out of the car without making a sound, and half slid down the bank into the meadow below. Their captors were so busy with their wheel and their abuse that they had utterly forgotten the two boys.

'Now come on, and quietly,' said Raymond, going in front, whilst Jim followed close at his heels.

In this way they went for the length of a couple of meadows, and then, deeming it safe, they climbed again on to the road.

'We are on the right road, and going in the right direction,' said Jim, now that it was safe to speak. 'There are about six miles in front of us, but we shall have to make the best of that. It might have been much worse. I wonder if Stan has got home yet? He must have given them the slip rather neatly.'

'We must make haste. I wonder what time it is?' said Raymond, pulling out his watch. He had a match in his pocket, and striking it they found that it was half-past two.

They trudged on, but when, about four miles from home, the rain that had for some time been threatening began to fall, they sought the shelter of a hay barn, and here, lying on the hay and sheltered from the rain, they were neither of them long in falling asleep. When they awoke it was broad daylight, and Raymond roused Jim by telling him that it was already half-past seven.

'Oh, I say, we shall not be home for breakfast! Let's hurry up,' said he.

They set off at a good pace, and had the good fortune, when the first mile had been done, to be overtaken by a farmer whom Jim knew, who gave them a seat in his cart. Thus it happened that they burst in upon the two girls as they sat at breakfast, only to find that Stanley, whom they had imagined safely at home, was not there at all.

'What can he have done?' asked Jim, when both sides had told all that there was to tell of the night's doings.

'That is what we must find out at once,' said Joan. 'When you have finished you will have to go and wash, and I will go to Auntie. Then I think we had better all set out to the Manor.'

When Aunt Eliza heard the story, as Joan related it, from beginning to end, she was horrified at the danger that the children had so thoughtlessly run into, and not a little surprised when the real character of the new dispenser was thus revealed to her. 'Oh, my dearie, I cannot let you go there!' she said when Joan told her they were all going up to the Manor to find Stanley.

'We shall have to go, Auntie. Think of Stanley,' she said. 'But we will promise you to go straight to the house. Mr. Haverford was quite nice to Father, and I think, any way, that he ought to know about those men.'

'Yes, yes, of course—forewarned is forearmed. But you must wait till I am dressed, and then I will go with you.'

'Let us take Hawkins, Auntie,' pleaded Joan, for she wanted no delay.

'Oh, yes, that would be a good idea. Take him, and go straight to the house and ask to see Mr. Haverford. Then I shall not worry about you.'

Joan gave all the required promises, and in a very short time the four children, accompanied by Hawkins,

the general factotum, set out for the Manor, telling the man the story of their adventures as they went along.

The gates of the Manor were unlocked, strangely enough. All the members of the party had been expecting to have to climb over them, and wondering not a little what this portended, they went in silence up the avenue to the old house.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN the three boys set off in different directions, the better to evade their pursuers, Stanley soon found that he was in a part of the wood that was unknown to him. It had never fallen to his lot to explore this section when they were looking for Jinks, and in a very short time he was utterly at a loss to know in which direction he ought to go in order to reach the wall and safety.

It was moonlight, as has been said before, but this did not do much to help him, as the trees grew so thickly in that spot that their dense foliage cast a shade in which the boy wandered hither and thither, as the noise of the pursuers came nearer, or receded farther away.

At last, it seemed that one or other of the two men was coming straight for him. He must fly in the opposite direction at once if he wished to escape, though where it might take him he had not the faintest idea. Nearer and nearer came the feet, and the sound of breaking twigs showed that whoever it was who was coming after him, he had no fear of disclosing his whereabouts.

Stanley turned and fled through the undergrowth, scratching and bruising himself at every turn. He felt rather than saw that he was now going uphill. He had no time to think, however, for at that moment his pursuer was so close that he could distinctly hear him breathing heavily with the exertion of the chase. Stanley quickened his mad plunging and burst through an unusually thick clump of bushes to plunge on the instant into a formidable thicket of brambles.

This was bad enough, but what happened next was worse, and yet it proved his salvation in the end.

So great was the impetus with which he had plunged through the bushes that he could not recover himself, and fell at once, quite helplessly, into the bramble clump.

Down he went; down, down, scratched and torn, until he wondered if he would ever stop falling. It was strange that he did not sooner touch the bottom. There was a noise, too, like bricks falling, and too dazed to understand anything, he lay at last for some time without moving, too glad to have stopped falling, and to be out of the reach of his pursuer, to wonder greatly where he was.

No sounds came to him of those from whom he and the others had been trying to escape. When he was a little rested, and able to think again, he wondered whether Raymond and Jim had managed to escape, and where they were by this time; and if the two men had taken themselves off, or if they were still in the wood.

Then sleep must have come to him. How long he slept it is impossible to say, but he awoke feeling that something warm and wet was passing and repassing over his face. With an exclamation of surprise and alarm he sat up, and then to his astonishment felt that there was beside him something alive: something with a rough coat and eyes that gleamed at him out of the darkness.

(Continued on page 402.)



"The two boys got stealthily out of the car."



“‘You must only have a little at first,’ said Stanley.”

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Continued from page 399.)

THE moment of panic gave place to one of delight as the truth 'flashed' across Stanley's mind. 'Jinks, old fellow!' he cried, and reaching out a hand he patted the dog's head.

Jinks, for it was he, gave a little bark of delight, and tried to jump, but he was clearly too weak for that and sank down on the ground beside Stanley at once.

'I say, how jolly! It was worth all that tumble to have found you. You must be starving, poor old chap. Wait a bit till I get a light.'

Thoroughly roused now, Stanley felt in his pockets for the matches that he had taken the precaution to bring with him. He found them, and also an end of a candle, and hastily lighting it he was able to see that Jinks was indeed terribly thin—almost starved in fact, which was not at all wonderful, seeing for how long he had been lost.

'What a good thing that Cook left those meat pies standing in the larder last night. I should not have thought of them if I had not seen them when I went for the matches,' said Stanley, talking to Jinks as though he were able to understand all that was said.

He felt again in his pockets, and the dog watched with eager eyes that were eloquent of his starved condition. He had known the boys' pockets to contain food before this, and though he was too weak to jump about and bark for it, he watched his master's actions with all the more earnestness.

'You must only have a little at first,' said Stanley, producing one of the pies, and feeding the dog with it in tiny pieces.

He ate the food ravenously, and when it was finished begged for more, but Stanley was firm. 'No more now, old fellow,' he said. 'You have been without too long, and if you ate a lot now there would be no Jinks for me to take home. You can have some more later on. And now I'll see just where it is that we have got to, you and I.'

He took the candle, and rising to his feet, began to look about. He was exceedingly stiff and sore with bruises and scratches, but otherwise he was unhurt, which considering the fall he had had was rather strange, and could only be accounted for by the fact that the brambles had broken the fall and let him down lightly, as he expressed it when telling the others afterwards.

He saw by the flickering light of the candle that they were in a passage rather more than nine feet high, which stretched away in one direction for much farther than Stanley could see. Clearly they were at the end of this passage; and it came to the boy with the light of an inspiration that he had unwittingly stumbled upon that for which the two men had been searching. It was a passage that they wanted to find, and then the thought came to him that no doubt this passage led to the Manor itself, and it was because they wished to steal something from there that they wanted to find the passage.

'I'm hanged if this is not the rummiest go,' he said to Jinks, as he examined the place. 'It is impossible to get out, for there is nothing to hold on to. But that is where I came in.'

He was looking up as he spoke, and there far above his head he could see a faint patch of daylight showing

through the branches of the brambles which grew so thickly over the opening to the passage. He in his fall had loosened a number of bricks, and these now lay about him on the floor. The sides and the roof of the passages were all of brick, and there was no foothold by which he might hope to climb out. The hole by which he had entered was in the middle of the roof, far above his head. 'I think it will be a good thing to go for a walk,' he said, meaning to follow the passage as far as he could, in the hope that some means of escape might be found at the other end. 'If there is no way out there I shall have to try pulling the place down and so get out that way,' he said, as he started off.

Jinks persisted in accompanying him, for he did not intend to risk Stanley's leaving him there. Seeing how weak the dog was, he carried him most of the time, walking with the greatest care so that he might have no accident. He had heard of passages like this that ended in a well, into which the unsuspecting might plunge in the darkness and never be heard of again. He did not mean that any such fate should overtake him, and he was getting on very well, when all at once he heard a sound that made his heart stand still, and then go on beating at a terrific rate. This was nothing more or less than the noise of some one walking along the passage towards him.

The footsteps were coming from the direction in which he was going, and for a moment Stanley thought he would turn and go back. But second and wiser thoughts prevailed. He had done nothing to be ashamed of; and, on the contrary, if this chanced to be Mr. Haverford, he would be able to tell him about the two men who were trying to get his secret. Reasoning thus, Stanley kept on his way, and very soon he saw that a lantern was coming towards him out of the darkness.

It was an exciting moment, for the boy did not know, of course, that this was Mr. Haverford; and even if it were he, supposing that he took him for a burglar, there was no telling what he might do under such circumstances. Thinking thus, he did about the only thing that he could do under these conditions. He called out, 'I am Stanley Railton, and I fell into this place.'

It was a good thing for him that he had called out, for Mr. Haverford was still armed with the revolver that he had fired off when the other two boys had been carried away in the motor. He did not of course know that the owner of this light was not one of his enemies, and he had raised the weapon, meaning to fire a blank cartridge as a signal to his servants that he required help.

But now, hearing this boy's voice addressing him, he lowered the weapon, and called back, 'Don't be afraid. Come here.'

Stanley needed no second bidding, and hastened up with Jinks tucked under one arm. He saw, by the combined lights of the candle and the lantern that this was the old gentleman whom the girls had seen in the wood, and he hastened to explain his presence there.

'Come, my boy, we will get to more comfortable quarters,' said the old gentleman, in such a friendly tone, that Stanley could scarcely believe his ears. He followed him through a long stretch of passage, and then up ever so many steps, emerging at last in a room, panelled in oak, into which the early morning sun was shining through a stained-glass window. 'This is my work-room,' said the old gentleman, 'and it is here that those fellows wished to come to steal my secret, and perhaps to kill me in doing so. But they are too late.

Only to-night I have sent it away by trusted messengers to the War Office, and now they may come as soon as they like.'

Stanley had by this time been put into a comfortable arm-chair, and had an opportunity to look about him, as he, at the old gentleman's request, told all the story of the loss of their dog, of their father's new dispenser, and how in looking for Jinks they had seen the messages put in the tree and had had their suspicions aroused. The old gentleman sat watching the boy, and from time to time muttering, 'The scoundrels!' as the doing of Herr Scharf and his comrades were brought to light. When Stanley had finished, he said, 'You must rest now, and then, when it is a little later, we will make inquiries about your companions, and I will tell you all that I can of my work, and why it has been necessary for me to do it in secret. It is half-past four now, and we will both have a little sleep. But the dog must have a little milk and water.'

He rang a bell, and the dumb servant answered it. He took Jinks away to feed him, and Stanley was shown to a room where a wide couch stood. On this he lay down, and was soon fast asleep, being aroused at last by the old gentleman himself. 'Your friends are here, asking for you,' he said. 'Will you come with me into the dining-room, and then we can talk as we eat.'

Stanley was awake in an instant, as all the adventures of the past night came back to him. He followed Mr. Haverford to another room, where he had a wash, and then, feeling much better, he went downstairs to the dining-room, where he found all the rest of the children awaiting him. Joan was nursing Jinks, who already looked a reformed character, and every one was talking at once. There was a hush when Mr. Haverford entered, which was broken by Norah, who, to the intense surprise of the others, ran up to the old gentleman and said:

'You are mother's Uncle Dick! You are, aren't you?'

(Concluded on page 411.)

THE RESTLESS DOG.

WHEN a dog occasionally follows his master or mistress into church, we think it is very strange, and feel rather inclined to pity the disconcerted owner. But in bygone times it was not at all unusual for men to take their dogs to church with them. They usually left them outside during the service, but the dogs often strayed in, searching for their masters, and had frequently to be driven out. Sometimes, if a man could rely upon his dog keeping quiet in the high pews of those days, he would take him into the church with him. This, however, was only common a long time ago.

It is said that, about a hundred years ago, the vicar of a Warwickshire church often allowed his dog to go into church with him. The church had one of those old-fashioned pulpits known as 'three-deckers,' which are now becoming very rare. These pulpits are arranged in three stages: the true pulpit, from which the sermon is delivered, being the uppermost. At the bottom there is a small box or pew, which is occupied by the clerk, who has a little reading-desk in front of him. Above this there is a similar, but rather better box, which is the vicar's reading-desk, which he occupies during the greater part of the service. Above this is the pulpit,

which is usually very high, and often has an ornamental top or canopy over it.

When the dog accompanied the Warwickshire vicar to church, they both went into the vicar's reading-desk immediately below the pulpit, and the vicar read the service over the head, as it were, of the clerk who sat in the box below. When the time came for the vicar to preach, he left his reading-desk and went up to the pulpit above, while the dog stayed behind in the reading-desk. As a rule the dog remained very quiet, but sometimes he would grow a little restless, and then he would while away the time by pawing at the head of the clerk below. In those days wigs were still sometimes worn, and one Sunday, when the dog was more than usually restless, he pawed at the old clerk's head so vigor usly that the man's wig came off! After that, probably, he was never taken to church again! W. A. A.

FLOWERS OF THE NATIONS.

XII.—FLOWERS OF THE PAST.

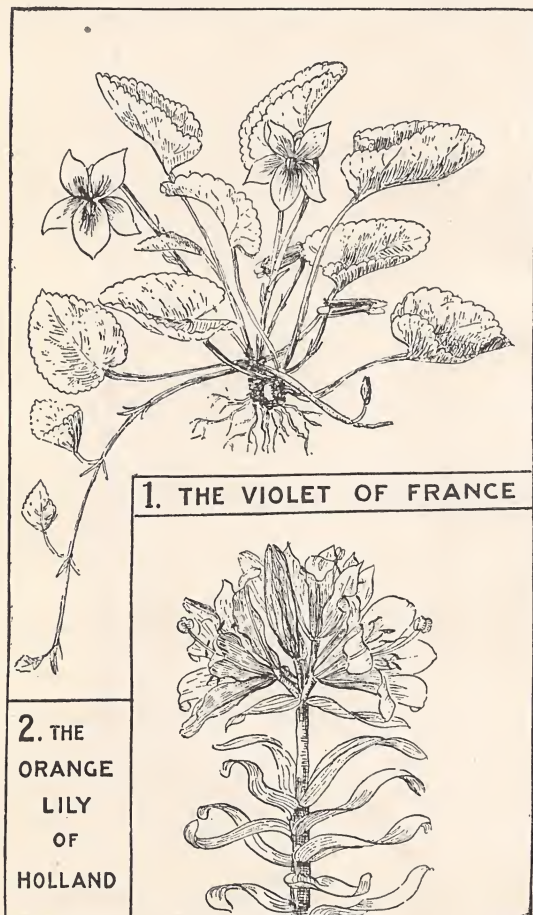
IN this concluding article I propose to tell you of several flowers which one cannot now call national in the sense that they represent a country, but they have at some time played an important part in its political history. For instance, there is the Violet; this flower is always associated with the great Napoleon I. When he was sent to the island of Elba he told his people that he would come back to them 'when the violets are in bloom.' This gave rise to the adoption of the violet as a sign or signal of belief in Napoleon, and by wearing it (or in fact anything of a violet colour) his friends were able to recognise one another. Of course it was a rather risky thing in France to be known to favour Napoleon after his downfall, but this simple sign worked very well. If a person met some one wearing violets or with the colour, violet, rather prominently displayed, the question would be asked, 'Do you love the violet?' and if the answer came just 'Yes,' the questioner knew he had made a mistake, and that this person was not a sympathiser with Napoleon, and was merely wearing the violet by accident. But if the reply came, 'Well!' (Eh, bien!) and 'It will appear in its season,' the two persons of like opinions had met.

Napoleon kept his word; he escaped from Elba, and returned on March 20th, 1815, and was greeted with violets everywhere. However, his triumph was short-lived, for he had to surrender in June of the same year, and was sent to St. Helena, where, as you know, he died. Louis XVIII. returned to the throne of France after Napoleon surrendered, and from then it was a very dangerous thing to be seen wearing violets, for it was then generally known that the flower was the sign of Napoleon's friends, and was thus considered an insult to Louis XVIII. So you see the simple violet played an important part for a time in the history of France.

An echo, so to speak, of its meaning appeared again in after years, when the Prince Imperial, the son of the Empress Eugénie (for many years resident at Chislehurst in Kent) was killed fighting for England in the Zulu war. His body was brought to England, and at his funeral hundreds of French people followed the coffin, all carrying violets.

In Holland, the Orange Lily, the emblem of the House of Orange, had a notorious spell, about 1824. There was trouble of a political nature with which I will not worry

you; but the supporters of the House of Orange, of course, displayed the lily, or, if they could not get it, anything of an orange colour. Their opponents were so angry that they ordered all orange lilies and even mari-golds in gardens to be destroyed. They also went to the



absurd length of forbidding carrots or oranges to be sold in the markets, because of their colour.

Again, the wild blue Cornflower has a special significance among Germans. I thought at first it was Germany's national flower, but it has only an historic connection of a comparatively modern date, like the violet. It was the favourite flower of Kaiser Wilhelm I. It seems that he may have been drawn towards it on account of the following little incident: When Napoleon threatened Berlin, the Queen Louise of Prussia (Kaiser Wilhelm I.'s mother) had to leave Berlin in great haste, taking with her her young children. The story goes on to say that for a time they had to take shelter in a field of standing corn, and that to distract the attention of the young people, she made crowns for them of the cornflowers growing around them. In remembrance of this, her son, who was the first Emperor of Germany, chose as his imperial emblem the Cornflower.

There is another almost national emblem for England,

namely, the Broom (*Planta Genista*), the badge for so many years of the Plantagenet family, and also the origin of its name. There are several stories to account for its adoption; the one I like best being to the effect that when Geoffrey of Anjou was passing along a rocky track among some mountains, he noticed the broom glowing in great profusion on the rocks, and brightening the locality with its wonderful wealth of golden bloom. He also noticed that often its roots were holding great masses of rock in position and preventing them from falling. He is reported to have gathered a sprig and placed it in his helmet, declaring that it should henceforth be the badge of his family, which he hoped would, like this plant, be rooted firmly and yet uphold the weak and falling.

These, and many other stories about flowers, may be found in *Flower Legends from Many Lands*, by Lizzie Deas, a most interesting book, and in some other books with similar titles.

As a closing word, I hope that the various pieces of information I have been enabled to put before you have interested you, and that you will look out for represen-



tations of the various National Flowers. You will find them in all sorts of places—on coins, banners, stamps, seals, stained glass, armorial bearings, shields, in tapestries and embroideries. Often they may take on queer unexpected shapes required by the designer, or to suit his fancy. If you visit other countries, take note of their important buildings, for the national flower is sure to appear in the carving somewhere, just as the English Rose is constantly represented, being used as a boss or an ornament. You can see hundreds of roses, for instance, at Westminster Abbey, and almost any other ancient (or modern) building of note.

E. M. BARLOW.



"A powerfully built man had just been lowered into the well."

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE LAZY MAN.

A TRAVELLER, taking a morning walk in Amsterdam, came upon a strange scene. A group of men was gathered around the well, into which a powerfully-built man had just been lowered. A pipe had been opened at the well's mouth, and from this pipe a stream of water was flowing into the well. The man below, if he did not wish to be drowned, had to keep out the water by means of a pump, which, like himself, was at the bottom of the well.

The traveller, pitying the man, supposing him to be the victim of a cruel practical joke, asked for an explanation.

'Sir,' said an old man, standing near, 'that fellow, as any one may see, is perfectly healthy and strong. I myself have offered him work twenty times, but he is incorrigibly lazy, and though he could easily earn his bread, he prefers to beg for it from door to door. We are now trying to make him realise that he *must* work. Unless he uses those strong arms of his, he will be drowned. Look!' continued the old Dutchman, bending over the rim of the well; 'he has already found out that he has muscles. At the end of an hour we shall draw him up, and I hope that the lesson will do him good.'

'WELL HIT, SIR—WELL HIT!'

THE pavilion is crowded, the batsman well set,
And his side is in need of each run he can get,
And eyes that are eager are watching the play,
For on him is depending the course of the day.
The team's well-tried captain, the pride of the school,
He stands at the wicket unruffled and cool;
The ball comes on swiftly, he hits out with grit,
And his side shout out wildly, 'Well hit, Sir—well hit!'

The score goes on mounting, with two, three, and four—
Like the sound of a cannon arises the roar.
Unheeding, the Captain with bat in his hand
Goes on hitting, still playing the game he has planned.
He's mastered the bowling, he's playing the game,
The fast and the slow are to him all the same;
In true English fashion he's 'doing his bit,'
And again the shout rises, 'Well hit, Sir—well hit!'

Even so may it be, boys, in life's greater game:
May yours be the courage that nothing can tame.
As the man at the wicket may you take your place,
With hope in your heart and a smile on your face;
Your successes be many—no chance thrown away,
May you go through life's innings with quick and clean
play,
Still game to the last, brave, enduring, and fit,
With the old cry to cheer you, 'Well hit, Sir—well hit!'

THE HERO.

HE never led his men into the breach,
Nor urged them on with fiery glowing speech;
Nor on the battlefield, nor on the wave,
Found he a soldier's or a sailor's grave.

But day by day within the little town
Bravely he fought his hasty spirit down;
And at his bedside, when the day was past,
Nightly he nailed his colours to the mast.

KING ALFRED IN THE COWHERD'S HUT.

A PLAY FOR HOME ACTING.

While ALFRED was in hiding from the Danes he took refuge in a cowherd's hut. He found the cowherd, DENEWULF, to be such a good and wise man that he afterwards made him a bishop. An incident of that time is the subject of this play.

The Characters are: KING ALFRED, DENEWULF (a herdsman), WIFE OF DENEWULF, and a WISE WOMAN. Any simple, rough costumes will serve the purpose of the play. THE SCENE is supposed to be a herdsman's hut in the time of Alfred the Great. (A bare table and stools will be enough scenery.) ALFRED and DENEWULF are sitting by a fire. (A few nightlights in a tin pan, with asbestos globes from a gas stove, would do for a fire.) ALFRED is disguised as a cowherd, in a rough smock and loose trousers, bound with braid. In his hand ALFRED has a roll of parchment which he lets fall as the curtain goes up. Beside him are his bow and arrows.

ALFRED. Nay, call me friend, not king, good Dene-wulf; methinks the very walls have ears and Danish cunning lurks beneath every listening bough. By night nor day no peace have I, save when in dreams I chance to conjure up a bright vision of England free once more—my England free—

DENEWULF. My 'friend,' never hath thy courage failed thee yet. Despair not, for I feel a happier day will come, and thou shalt once more sit at ease within thy halls, and teach the learning that thy friends forget in these rude times of war. But I must leave thee, for the day grows late, and much have I to do without. Yet ere I go, repeat to me some verses from thy manuscript, that the sweet sounds may linger with me while I set upon my evening toil.

ALFRED. Alas! good friend, my songs are so full of sadness that I fear they will not cheer thee much upon thy way. [*He sings or repeats*]:

Alas! in how grim
A gulf of despair,
Dreary and dim,
For sorrow and care,
My mind toils along
When the waves of the world,
Stormy and strong,
Against it are hurl'd.

When in such strife,
My mind will forget
Its light and its life
In worldly regret;
And through the night
Of this world doth grope.
Lost to the Light
Of Heavenly hope.

Thus it hath now
Befallen my mind,
I know no more how
God's goodness to find.

But groan in my grief
 Troubled and tost,
 Needing relief
 For the world I have lost.*

DENEWULF [*throwing himself at ALFRED's feet, quite overcome by the sadness of the song*]. My king, I cannot bear to hear such sorrow from thy lips: this is the season of glad hope and peace. At Christmas even the poorest churl, in his lonely hut, must feel within his heart some thoughts of sweetness and content. It cannot be that our most gracious king should fall lower than these, unable to raise himself from out the black slough of despair. [*He rises and regains his seat.*]

ALFRED. Oh, Denewulf, I am ashamed that thou shouldst see my weakness. 'Tis true that I am lower than the churl an I try not to raise me from my foolish self—the self that views the future in so black a light. Dear friend, thy comfort and thy wisdom make my heart more bright. I feel within me new hopes arise, new plans to scatter far my enemies, to rid my land from the all-conquering Danes. Yet should I never conquer them, should I be doomed my days to spend between four small bare walls, I know that I have learned within these four bare walls much wisdom, Denewulf.

DENEWULF. Ah, King! what wisdom could I teach thee? It surely cannot be that kings can learn from peasants?

ALFRED. Yes, Denewulf, much knowledge have I gathered of the strivings and the sorrows of the poor. If God allow that I once more upon my throne shall sit, God willing, I shall strive unto these poor some happiness to bring. Delay thy evening round awhile, my friend, and I will sing the simple ditty that thou lovest so well. . . .

ALFRED [*sings or says*]:

Thus to us did Alfred sing
 A spell of old;
 Song craft the West Saxon King
 Did thus unfold:

Long and much he longed to teach
 His people then,
 These mixt sayings of sweet speech
 The joys of men;

That no weariness forsooth,
 As well it may,
 Drive away delight from truth,
 But make it stay.

So, he can but little seek
 For his own pride:
 A fytte of song I fitly speak,
 And nought beside:

A folk-beknown and world-read thing
 I have to say;
 To all the best of men I sing,—
 List, ye that may.

[*Enter the COWHERD's WIFE hurriedly at the close of the verses. She has a plate of freshly made cakes on her dish. Hasty exit of DENEWULF.*]

WIFE [*eyeing ALFRED in an unfriendly manner*]. 'Tis nice indeed for some to sit and sing: I think a pleasant life. Some have to toil to keep that cruel wolf called Hunger from the door. Perchance, good master singer, thou couldst mind these cakes for me. A heavy work, I own, and one which needeth care. If thou couldst have the wit to turn them when they brown, thou mightest earn thy supper in some more honest way than singing songs. [*She places the cakes by the fire.*]

ALFRED. Good mother, scold me not; these cakes my full attention I will give, and sing no more if it doth fret thee so.

WIFE. Good lack, I care not if thou singest or holdest thy tongue. A lazy knave I know thee for. Soft words in plenty: but actions, I see none. [*Exit.*]

[*ALFRED takes up his bow and begins to mend it. It falls from his hands, as he dreams, staring at the fire. Enter a WISE WOMAN. ALFRED by this time is asleep.*]

WISE WOMAN. 'Tis strange, this feeling strong which bids me enter here. 'Tis no one great I see. Nought but a cowherd, sleeping by his fire.

ALFRED [*waking and becoming aware of her presence*]. Good evening, dame! Why starest thou at me?

WISE WOMAN. Good sir! I cannot understand this light which filleth all my soul. It is the presence of one greater far than any I have known.

ALFRED. Good dame, a simple herdsman I. What wantest thou?

WISE WOMAN. To see thy hand. [*KING shows it. She falls on the floor in front of him.*] My king, my lord, I felt thy noble presence! [*She kisses his hand.*] Great king, soon shall thy sorrows end and thou ascend a throne yet more secure than any in this land hath seen.

ALFRED. That, time may show.

WISE WOMAN. Great knowledge, King, hast thou—order and learning, wisdom and justice, making melody within thy heart. And all the years thou reignest, and ages after, the wonder of thy life shall not be forgotten, for learning is a bud that thrives in fruitful soil. 'Tis only those who have knowledge of suffering who can hope to rise to those fair heights called Fame.

[*Enter DENEWULF's wife who, seeing the cakes black, catches ALFRED a box on the ear.*]

WIFE. Out upon thee, loon; the cakes are burnt! [*She picks up the plate or tin, and hastily slips a piece of painted black paper over the cakes. Turning to the audience*]: 'Tis plain that thou canst eat them fast enough, but hast not kindliness nor wit to turn a cake to help a woman sore oppressed by work.

WISE WOMAN. Hush, woman! 'Tis the king!

WIFE. The king! [*She drops on her knees at his feet. A great noise of footsteps is heard outside. DENEWULF runs in, full of excitement.*]

DENEWULF. My lord, my king, a troop of followers are without, with arms and horses, ready all for thee to lead them on to battle with the Danes.

WISE WOMAN. I knew it, King, and thou shalt be victorious.

[*ALFRED stands up with his arms raised, bow in one hand, arrows in the other. A look of great joy on his face.*]

CURTAIN.

* The verses are from Alfred's own translation of the philosopher Boëthius.



“Out upon thee, loon; the cakes are burnt!”



"The Squire clung with all his might."

CHARLIE'S AMBITION.

MOTHER, when I'm grown up, I mean to be a doctor.'

So said Charlie Woodman, a look of resolve on his bright young face. Mrs. Woodman, who was a widow possessed of very little money, sighed heavily.

'More likely a farm labourer, my boy,' said she. 'Where in the world do you think the money is coming from to train you for a doctor, I should like to know?'

'I can't tell you that, Mother,' Charlie replied with a laugh. 'But mark my words, it's a doctor and not a farm labourer that I shall be.'

With this, he turned away from the little kitchen where his mother was busy sewing, and made his way out into the woods near by. Here—his ambition filling his heart to the exclusion of nearly everything else—he took out his pocket-knife, and upon one of the old trees he cut out these letters:

'C. W. M.D.'

When he had finished his work, he surveyed it with pride.

'Hullo, boy! What are you up to? I didn't give you permission to cut the alphabet on any of my trees.'

Charlie flushed crimson.

He had no idea that the owner of the wood, Squire Merivale, was close by.

'Please, sir,' he said, and something in his fearless yet respectful manner won the heart of the Squire, 'it isn't the alphabet I'm cutting—it's —'

Charlie hesitated, suddenly feeling half ashamed of his great ambition.

'Well, go on,' said the Squire.

'It's something I mean to be, sir,' proceeded Charlie, 'when I'm grown up—"Charles Woodman, M.D."'

'Oh, that's it, is it? Take my advice, boy, and don't let your ambition run away with you.'

With this, and a word of caution against the too free use of his pocket-knife, Mr. Merivale went on his way.

The winter that followed this incident was the hardest Charlie had ever known.

He was obliged to leave school in order to help support his mother, and the only work that was forthcoming, in the Fen district in which he lived, was field labour.

Bravely he did his work, patiently and uncomplainingly, hoping that something might yet 'turn up' which would enable him to fulfil his ambition.

And one day, or rather one night, something *did* 'turn up.' A vast flood (owing to the heavy rainfall and a gap in the bank of the river), wiped out the homes of scores of the poor Fenland dwellers, amongst them the cottage of Charlie's mother.

Mrs. Woodman and her son were almost the first to be rescued, and then Charlie, being a strong and sturdy lad, set himself to the task of helping others.

He worked like a man, his whole heart and strength in his task. It was not until towards midnight that he felt his powers giving out, and he and his fellow-workers (there being nothing apparently left just then for them to do) decided to take a spell of rest.

Charlie, as it befell, was told off to drag the boat—in which they had made their excursions over the swirling waters—towards higher ground, and moor it to a stake, the others making their way homewards, or at least to a place of shelter.

It was just as Charlie had firmly secured the craft that he heard a cry—he listened for a while, then again

it rang out over the water. It was unmistakably a cry for help. Without any more ado, realising that not a moment was to be lost, Charlie rapidly unfastened the boat, and pushing it into the flood he prepared to set about a work of rescue all by himself.

'Help! help!' again came the shout.

A cloud presently rolled away from the face of the moon, revealing to Charlie's eyes, at some little distance ahead, a man clinging with one arm to the branch of a tree, and clasping in the other a helpless little child.

Quick to grasp the danger of the situation, Charlie redoubled his efforts, and very soon drew near the spot.

'Hi, there; be quick!'

Charlie recognised the voice—it was Mr. Merivale who called. He, with his little daughter Margery, had been rowing to a place of refuge, when by some means the boat overturned, and both were flung into the water.

The Squire, fortunately, was a strong swimmer, and seizing hold of the child, he had managed to reach the overhanging branch of a tree. Here he clung with all his might, till Charlie rowed the boat alongside. It was by no means an easy matter for the boy to steady his craft, and take the little girl into his keeping, but with considerable care, he accomplished the work. Then (the terrified child safe in the boat) he turned his attention to the Squire, who was now nearly benumbed with the cold.

Thanks to Charlie's aid, however, Mr. Merivale was able to scramble into the boat, after which he took one of the oars, and helped his young rescuer to row towards a higher level of ground.

'What's your name, boy?' asked Mr. Merivale, when later on, their voyage over, they were all three safe on dry land.

'I'm Charlie Woodman, sir, if you please,' replied the lad modestly.

The name was familiar to the Squire.

'What! the boy who carved those letters on my tree?' he said.

'Yes, sir,' Charlie flushed redly in the moonlight as he answered.

'Charles Woodman, M.D.,' said the Squire, in a thoughtful tone of voice. 'Ah, well, we shall see—I'm too cold and wet, and so is my little girl, for any further talk just now. May God bless you, boy, for what you've done to-night! By-and-by, I will try and think what I can do for you.'

Mr. Merivale was as good as his word, and it was thanks to his generosity that the necessary fees were paid for Charlie to enter, in course of time, upon a medical career. And so, after all, he was able to fulfil his ambition, and write after his name the coveted letters, 'M.D.'

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

A BIRTHDAY GREETING.

THE North wind and the South wind,
The East wind and the West,
Through a year of gladness,
Blow you all that's best;
Lay 'good-fortune' kisses
On your smiling mouth;—
The West wind and the East wind,
The North wind and the South!

SHEILA BRAINE.

THE SILVER BIRCH.

BY EDNA LAKE.

(Concluded from page 403.)

THE effect of Norah's words was startling. The owner of the Manor became so pale that all the children thought he must be going to faint. But he did nothing of the sort, only sat down in a chair at the head of the table and drew Norah to him. 'How did you guess that, dearie?' he asked, in a low tone, stroking her hair.

'I saw your portrait, the tiny one in mother's locket, once,' she said. 'Raymond never saw it. Mother told me all about you then.'

'And what would you say if I told you that your mother and father are coming here for Christmas?' asked Mr. Haverford; whilst the Railtons looked on with surprise at the unexpected turn affairs had taken.

'There is so much to tell, that I will try to make things as short and as clear as possible,' said Mr. Haverford, after Raymond and Norah had finished their jubulations over his announcement about their parents coming to the Manor for Christmas.

'First,' said their host, but here he had to stop, for at that moment Dr. Railton and Aunt Eliza appeared, having started as soon as the Doctor arrived home, to learn tidings of the children.

'That's a good thing. Now we shall all hear,' said Jim, with satisfaction, for he greatly enjoyed this part of the proceedings. His curiosity was about to be satisfied, and the thought was a pleasant one to him.

'First,' repeated Mr. Haverford, when they had all settled down once more, 'I must tell you that I have been for many years engaged upon an important invention, which I laid before the War Office three years ago. It is a contrivance for wrecking aeroplanes in time of war, and would be a most useful asset to our country. Unfortunately my work became known, and for a long time I have lived in entire seclusion in order to protect my secret. But it is impossible to safeguard oneself. The servant who betrayed me was one who had been with me many years, and in whom I had complete trust till quite lately. He sold to the German Government some papers he stole from me, but, fortunately, they were worthless. He then met this man, Herr Scharf and the two conspired to enter my room and take more plans of my invention to sell to their Government. By some means they got to know of the secret passage which led from my room, only, happily, they did not know where its exit might be. Knowing they were searching for this I purposely left some old documents lying about where they could be found, containing wrong directions that applied to something entirely different. These, as you know, they studied.'

'Yes, rather. They thought it was that oak in the wood on the other side of the road,' put in Jim.

'Well, then, they must have found the mistake out, for to-night they came here, and I imagine they were measuring at the silver birch—which was the right tree—when you found them. But their efforts would have been wasted, for my secret was in safe keeping, and on its way to London by that time,' said Mr. Haverford. 'Now, is everything clear?'

'Yes, most things. But I don't understand why Jinks was in that passage, or why those men wanted to enter this house by the passage,' said Stanley, thoughtfully.

'I can answer the last question,' said their host. 'The room that I have worked in I have slept in all the time, so that it would not have been possible to enter it without my knowing. And, in addition to this, there is a patent lock on the door of which they could not gain the secret. The only way was for them to enter the room by means of the passage at some time when I was not there.'

'I see,' said Stanley; whilst Jim said, 'What about Jinks getting into the passage, though?'

'I think I can guess at that,' said Dr. Railton. 'He must have been scratching for a rabbit and loosened some of the bricks and plunged in, very much as you did. Perhaps the rabbit went in too, and he fed on that for a time.'

They went after breakfast to the spot where Stanley had entered the passage in that surprising manner, and found that the Doctor's theory was correct. The place abounded in rabbit-holes, and no doubt Jinks had gone down one of these in pursuit of a rabbit, and in scratching had loosened some of the bricks roofing the passage, which had already been a little dislodged by the roots of the trees growing about it.

Close by, on the hill, stood the silver birch, and the reason that the children had never discovered the hole was that it was completely hidden by the brambles, though the mystery of the barking that they had heard was easily explained.

There is not much more to tell. In finding Jinks the children had solved the mystery of the silver birch, and, in addition to that, Norah had found an uncle of whom she had often heard in her babyhood, before she had been sent home from India to school in England. This uncle had brought her mother up, but had been so displeased at her marrying a man whom he considered beneath her, that he had refused ever to see her again. But time had softened his resentment, and the knowledge that the man whom he had considered unworthy had done well in his profession had been instrumental in healing the breach. He had written to his niece, and now, at last, arrangements had been made for them to come to Dene Manor when they returned from India at Christmas. This was to have been kept as a surprise for Raymond and Norah, but circumstances had been against this plan succeeding. Yet no one felt that they would have altered anything. Jinks was found, and an uncle into the bargain, who, although he might be an inventor, and mad, was a very nice old gentleman when you got to know him. Now that his secret was safe, he threw open his house, had a proper staff of servants, and behaved in every way just as a model uncle should, treating his own niece and nephew, and the Railtons as well, in the most approved uncle manner.

And as for Jinks, he was always welcome to any rabbits that he cared to catch in the grounds of the Manor, although, for certain reasons, it was deemed best to have that passage filled up without loss of time. The children, one and all, rather disapproved of this, being inclined to regard it as their own especial possession.

Herr Scharf and his confederates were never heard of again in the village, and in a few weeks the Doctor had a new dispenser, very much more after his own heart, and the only messages that the letter-box in the silver birch held were those that the children themselves placed there.

- E. LAKE.

THE END.



"The Railtons looked on with surprise at the unexpected turn things had taken."